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PEARSON'S WEEKLY
XMAS NUMBER

No. 1221. TRANSMISSION AT BOOK RATES. WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 6, 1913. TWOPENCE.

NO SWELL.

GOOD-HEARTED old Farmer Coles, in accordance with old-time custom, had decided to give his farm hands a Christmas feed. He had, however, been impressed lately by reading about some up-to-date course dinners, so he ordered the feast to start with soup, to be followed by goose, roast beef, and plum-pudding, and wines.

The farm hands duly assembled, and having fasted for twenty-four hours in view of the occasion, there was a keen edge on their appetites.

When the first course was placed before one sturdy son of the soil, he eyed it in blank dismay. Then he became righteously indignant.

"Hi, wot's this ver?" he called out. "Give Oi a bit o' goose! This be all gravy!"

THE little fellow was crying bitterly by the roadside, and the good, kind lady stopped and patted him gently on the head.

"Why, my little man, what's the matter?"

"Matter, mum? 'Ere 'ave I been a-playing truant all day, and I've just remembered the Christmas holidays began yesterday.

SOME SIGNS THAT CHRISTMAS IS COMING.

OFFICE BOYS, ABOUT NOW, TAKE AN EXTRAORDINARY INTEREST IN WORK

AND THE MAID OF ALL WORK IS NOTHING IF NOT THOROUGH IN HER DOMESTIC DUTIES

DUSTMEN ARE PRACTICING THE GLAD HAND IN READINESS FOR CHRISTMAS

AND RAILWAY PORTERS WITH AN EYE TO THE FUTURE, GIVE THE RETORT COURTEOUS

CHARLADIES SUDDENLY DELIGHT IN DOING LITTLE ACTS OF KINDNESS

WHILST RICH OLD UNCLES FIND THEIR RELATIVES VERY SOLICITOUS AFTER THEIR HEALTH, ABOUT NOW.

BRIBERY.

IT was Christmas season, but that hardly seemed to account for the proprietor of the china shop giving the thin, red-faced girl half-a-sovereign.

Nevertheless, the girl didn't seem satisfied.

"Is that all? And during the past year ain't I tumbled down stairs four times with trays full of crockery, broken thirty-five tumblers, twenty-six cups, nine meat-platters, four saucers, seventeen plates, and three of the mistress' best tureens?"

"There, there!" said the shopman soothingly. "Here's another five shillings for you. And don't forget me, you know," he ended, with a wink.

THEY had scrambled through the first dance on the programme, and he was leading her back to a seat. "I could die dancing, couldn't you?" he asked.

"No," she replied. "There are pleasanter ways than being trampled to death."

"I DON'T believe in allowing servants to get the upper hand. I always make mine keep her place."

"You are lucky. Ours never does for more than three weeks."

THE discussion between the two friends had become heated.

"But any idiot can see that," remarked one of them.

"That's where you have the advantage," was the other's polite rejoinder.

MISTRESS: "I wouldn't hold the baby so near the tiger's cage, Jane."

JANE: "There's no risk. Th' tiger is a 'man-eater,' and th' child is a gir-rul."

FIRST PERSON: "What's the shortest day in the year?"

SECOND PERSON: "I don't know, but it's Christmas by my financial account."

J. J. Bell, the author of "Wee Macgregor," writes a story for the Christmas PEARSON'S. Now on sale

COMPLETE SHORT STORY.

The Four-poster

A Creepy, Crawly, Ghost Story.

By CHARLES BARTON.

I.

"AND you have quite made up your mind not to sell?" said the parchment-faced old man, devouring the four-post bedstead with his small, gleaming eyes.

"Quite, Mr. Partington," replied John Holt, landlord of the Black Horseman. "I bought it at the Manor sale purposely for the house. It seemed to me in keeping with an old inn like this. That is why I refused your offer for my bargain at the sale."

"Yes, it certainly is that," said the other, thoughtfully eyeing the bedstead. The rays of a ruddy winter sun shining through the casement window, danced on the massive mahogany posts with their swelling curves and elaborate carvings, until the whole construction seemed on fire.

"I would have paid you a fair price," said the dealer regretfully. "In fact, I may say over a fair price. I have a customer who wants just the very thing, and has money with which to gratify his fancies. However, you won't sell, and that ends it. Do you believe in ghosts, Mr. Holt?"

He shot out the question suddenly, with a keen glance at the other's face. John Holt looked surprised, but he did not smile.

"Well, sir, I don't know," he replied slowly. "Why do you ask?"

Mr. Partington gave a dry little laugh.

"Oh, no particular reason," he returned. "Only you know, of course, that there is some sort of tale about the bedstead."

"I can't say as I do," answered the landlord.

Mr. Partington's eyebrows lifted.

"No!" he ejaculated. "Well, I am surprised. But, then, I am interested in such things and pick up all sorts of queer stories in my travels."

"What is the story?" asked John Holt curiously, but the old dealer shook his head with another of his dry chuckles.

"No, no," said he. "Ignorance is bliss in this case. If you are told nothing your imagination will be less likely to play you tricks. By-the-way, you will not let this room, of course?"

"Why not?" returned the landlord, a little curtly. He felt somewhat annoyed at the other's reticence.

"I cannot explain," Partington replied quickly. "I'd rather not. My reasons would seem foolish ones to you perhaps, and I am sensitive to ridicule. You will have no objection to my photographing the bedstead, I presume? I have my camera below."

"No objection in the least," answered John Holt gruffly, "but I must say I'd like to know the bottom of your talk."

Mr. Partington shook his head stubbornly.

"I wish I had said less than I have," he returned, "but many thanks for your permission. I will get to work at once whilst the light holds. It is poor enough as it is, and the plate will need at least half an hour's exposure. I would like to be quite free from interruption, if possible."

"I will see to it that you are not disturbed, sir."

"Thanks. By the way, I'd like a meal of some sort afterwards. The best you can do, with a bottle of that rare old port of yours, landlord."

John Holt's face brightened.

"Very good, Mr. Partington."

A heavy portmanteau was conveyed upstairs, and, carefully locking the door against possible intruders, Mr. Partington produced from the bag a strange-looking machine with a clockwork and dial attachment, and placed it carefully on the floor. Then there appeared a steel centre-bit, a small bottle of oil, and a slender saw, strange accessories, surely, for a photographer!

With a strength somewhat surprising in so old and apparently frail a frame, Mr. Partington moved the foot of the bedstead some four or five feet aside, and turning back the carpet, which covered the whole of the floor, knelt down and commenced boring a hole just underneath where the centre of the bedstead would be when replaced in its original position.

The hole made, he inserted the carefully oiled saw, and swiftly cut an orifice large enough to admit the complicated-looking machine. This he lowered gently, after winding up the clockwork arrangement and adjusting the dial-hand to the figure twelve. He bent his head and listened. A dull even ticking told him that all was going well, and he chuckled contentedly.

To fit in the circle of wood and replace carpet and bedstead, was the work of a few minutes. Then Mr. Partington carefully gathered up his tools and locked them in the portmanteau. One swift but searching glance around to see that he had left no tell-tale signs, and he left the room, portmanteau in hand. He found a steaming repast ready, and half an hour later, after steadily resisting John Holt's solicitations to stay the night, Mr. Partington left for the seven-mile distant railway station in the hotel dog-cart.

II

AN angry sunset had heralded a tempestuous night, and by the time darkness fell a roaring wind was battering sleet against the windows of the Black Horseman. The house, not large in the way of accommodation, was full of guests, entirely commercial men, the last one having arrived within an hour of Mr. Partington's departure. He was a mild-looking youth in glasses, who spoke in a high tenor with a curious suggestion of a howl in it. He gave his name as Felthorpe—Augustus Rippington Felthorpe, entering it in full in the visitors' book.

Then there was the genial Simes, one of the bluff, hearty type, and, in direct contrast to him, one Stockwell, a dark, morose man, who drank hot water with his poached eggs on toast; also a curly-haired youngster of about three-and-twenty, with an evident tendency to practical joking. He usually gave his name at strange hotels, where he knew he should receive no letters, as "Sherlock Holmes," but John Holt knew him to be Mr. James Bunting. He was being watched somewhat uneasily by an elderly Scotsman of patriarchal appearance, who had seen Mr. Bunting covertly filling the caster-sugar dredge with salt. A brisk little rotund man named Hunt, who spoke with a strong Cockney accent, and a fierce-eyed giant, who answered to the name of Grimwood, completed the party, seven in all.

They were, without exception, gathered in the snug smoking-room. A party of four were playing a game of whist. The others were seated in various uncouth attitudes round the fire.

"It is only a few days to Christmas," observed the spectacled Mr. Felthorpe, breaking a long silence.

"Christmas," grunted the giant. "Ugh!" and subsided into a moody silence.

The spectacled youth cleared his throat.

"I expect this old inn could tell strange tales if it could speak," said he in his high, somewhat affected, tones. "I know of at least one strange legend affecting this locality."

The fierce-eyed Grimwood gave vent to a short, harsh laugh like a pistol shot, causing the whist players to glance up in momentary surprise.

"Ghost stories, eh!" said he scornfully. "Listen to that, Bunty."

"What's that?" replied the facetious young man absently, and trumped his partner's ace.

"Ghosts! Here is a gentleman says he knows one."

"Oh, 'ere, I sye!" came a complaining voice. "Wist is wist. We can't plye if there's gine to be all this chat."

Mr. Simes rose with a deep-chested laugh.

"Well, that's the rubber," said he. "I think we have had enough cards, and it is none too warm back here. Let us draw around the fire with the others, and listen to this yarn, whatever it is."

Under the energetic organisation of Mr. Simes the whole party established themselves in a wide but cosy circle around the fire. Just as they were seated Mr. Holt came in to see about drinks. Mr. Simes suggested that he should join them.

"I should be very pleased, as far as I am concerned," said Mr. Felthorpe. "Indeed, I was about to suggest it, though, living in this part, he is probably acquainted with the story I am about to relate."

"Thank you kindly, gentlemen!" observed the landlord. "I shall be very pleased!"—and he settled himself in a Windsor chair.

All eyes, save those of Mr. Grimwood, who feigned slumber, were turned on the spectacled youth.

"In an ancient mansion not far from here," he began, "stands, probably in the same chamber where it has stood for centuries, a splendid specimen of a mahogany four-post bedstead——"

John Holt started, and Mr. Grimwood opened his eyes suddenly.

"Excuse me, sir!" put in the landlord. "But may I ask the name of the mansion?"

Mr. Felthorpe frowned slightly. How could he be impressive if he were to be interrupted in this way.

"I am somewhat averse to mentioning names," he replied somewhat chillingly; "but I do not know that there is any particular reason for withholding this one. The house I referred to is Durnwood Manor."

John Holt smiled slowly.

"Thank you, sir!" said he. "I asked for a reason. The Manor furniture was all sold last week. There was a four-days' auction. I wonder you didn't hear of it. And the article you speak of is at this moment in a room just over our heads. As a matter of fact, one of you gentlemen sleeps in it to-night."

"I do!" put in Mr. Grimwood gruffly. "Looks like a pall."

Mr. Felthorpe's jaw dropped.

"That—that bedstead in this house!" he exclaimed. "And—and someone going to sleep in it!"

John Holt started again as though stung, and opened his mouth to speak, but the ferocious Grimwood was before him.

"Sleep in it! Yes. Why not?" he ejaculated, and fixed a choleric eye on Mr. Felthorpe, who flushed and looked uncomfortable.

"I—I—— No reason whatever, of course!" he stammered. "But this is quite a surprise to me. I had no idea——" And he stopped confusedly. The genial Simes came to the rescue.

"Never mind!" said he. "Drive ahead with the yarn. It will be more interesting than ever now."

"Yes, let us have the story, by all means," added John Holt, a little grimly. He seemed to have become possessor of quite an historic piece of furniture, and he intended to know more about it this time.

Mr. Felthorpe took a sip at his glass and continued somewhat nervously.

"In the reign of King George the Third—in the year 1784, to be exact—there came to Durnwood Manor one stormy December night a gallant gentleman accompanied by a very beautiful lady. They were travelling on horseback and craved lodging.

"When their cloaks were discarded they stood revealed as a handsome pair, attired in the finest of laces and brocades, their names being given as Sir Rupert and Lady Betty Clavering. Sir Rupert's sword-handle glittered with jewels, in addition to those worn by his lady. He also carried two great horse pistols as a protection against highwaymen. The Lord and Lady of Durnwood made their unexpected guests welcome, warmed and fed them and conducted them—no doubt personally—to their chamber, containing the mahogany four-poster. Then, wishing them good-night and restful slumbers, the host and hostess left them to their repose."

Mr. Felthorpe paused and gazed musingly at the fire.

"Just at the hour of midnight," he continued impressively, "when the house was wrapped in slumber, there came a deafening peal of thunder, followed by a fearful shriek, which resounded through the building and curdled the blood of all who heard it. The affrighted household were astir immediately, but the chamber of Sir Rupert and Lady Clavering remained ominously silent. Full of strange forebodings, they knocked, but received no response. At length they broke open the locked door, and a terrible sight met their gaze.

"On the bed, fully dressed, lay, not a handsome gallant, and his beauteous lady, but the forms of a decrepit old man and a hideous hag, both stone dead, and bearing on their wrinkled visages such ghastly expressions of mortal terror that the women who beheld fainted and the men turned pale and sick. The casement window was wide open, and the snow had beaten in upon the dead pair, so that their grey hair lay dank across their features, and their fine clothing clung wet and cold about their shrivelled forms."

"Tell us when the laugh comes in!" muttered Mr. Bunting feebly.

"Of what followed immediately there is no record," continued Mr. Felthorpe; "but it is clear that the names given were assumed ones."

"Pooh! *Faust* with variations!" said Mr. Grimwood. "Is that all?"

"Not quite," replied Mr. Felthorpe. "The bed was henceforth haunted, and the story goes that—— But really," he broke off embarrassedly, "I don't know that the remainder will interest you."

"Go on! Go on!" came half-a-dozen voices—John Holt's among the most persistent.

"Well, then," resumed Mr. Felthorpe, with an air of desperation, "the story goes that whenever during the month of December anyone slept in the bed they were aroused on the stroke of midnight by an awful voice repeating the couplet—— I have the exact words here." And Mr. Felthorpe produced a notebook, from which, after a brief search, he read:

"Who slumbers 'twixt my corners four
Shall taste of Death ere Yule is o'er!"

"Oh, but confound it, sir!" blustered Mr. Grimwood. But Felthorpe held up a thin white hand.

"One moment," said he, again consulting his notebook. "You have asked for the whole story. You shall have it. It is on record that in the December of the year following an attorney named Roger Fairchild slept in the fatal bed. He was found dead on the following morning from no apparent cause. Some thirty years later, in the December following Waterloo, one Sir Percy Loverell, a cornet in the Guards, tarried at the Manor for one night on his journey from London to Portsmouth. He, too, slept in the four-poster, and in the morning was found to have left on a far longer journey. On December 18th, 1837, a doctor named Savory——"

John Holt rose.

"Really, gentlemen," said he, "I must protest. This bedstead is my property. For the good name of my house——"

Mr. Grimwood's sarcastic eye checked him.

Mr. Felthorpe smiled sadly.

"I regret this extremely," said he, "but you insisted you know."

(Continued at foot of next page.)

The Christmas NOVEL MAGAZINE Is quite the best that's ever been.

BEFORE THE TANGO CAME.

Weird and Wonderful Dances That Have, at One Time, Been All the Rage, Just as the Tango is Now.

DANCING, like disease, attacks people suddenly. At some periods they desire to dance in a slow and dreamy fashion, while at others they must keep tearing and rushing about in an almost frenzied manner.

At one time in our history there was a craze for the minuet, a very stately dance, much in favour at the Court of King Charles. Since that time, however, dances have come and gone in amazing fashion.

The biggest dance craze previous to the Tango was the Cake-walk, or coon dance. This, like the Tango, was introduced by the music-halls, and in a very short time it set all London raving, and later a goodly portion of the country. Everybody, from

The Cake-walk dance was once as big a craze as the Tango is now. It was danced in the ballroom and on the stage, and, like ragtime, came to us from the homes of the negroes.

politicians and poets down to office-boys and organ-grinders, were smitten with the craze.

The dance, like ragtime, was supposed to have originated in the log cabins of negroes in the Southern States of America, and was usually performed at weddings and other times of rejoicing. In this vigorous dance the lady had to bend her body backwards as far as she possibly could, at the same time taking high steps and advancing forward.

While this was going on the gentleman did almost anything he could think of. At one time he would wave his stick frantically as though urging the lady to dance even more vigorously than she was already doing, while at another time he would appear to be fanning his partner with his hat in order to keep her cool.

The cake-walk craze was followed by a revival in milder and more picturesque dances; the jolly Dutch dance and the Highland fling, for instance, had a brief spell of popularity, but there was not another real rage until Miss Maud Allan came along and introduced the Classical dance.

At this time classical dancers were in great demand, and managers became more and more

The jolly Dutch dance and the Highland fling have had their day.

daring in their shows until a popular agitation was got up against them, with the Nonconformist clergyman, Mr. Meyer, at the head.

After the storm had died down there was a big outbreak of Oriental dances. Eastern spectacles were the thing at all the big variety halls, and the costumes, typifying the spirit of the East, which the dancers wore were no less weird and wonderful than the dances themselves.

After the Oriental revival, the Apache dance appeared. This "dance of the criminals" came from Paris, and pretended to show how life was led in the underworld of that city.

It was a most unedifying spectacle, danced with knives, and usually ended up with one of the

Miss Maud Allan introduced the craze for the Classical dance.

dancers being killed by the other. Madame Polaire, the famous tiny-waisted actress, was perhaps the best exponent of this weird art.

This dance did not live long, for about this time some Russian dancers made their appearance, and they were an instant success. These performers presented dancing in the truest sense of the word, and were a decided change from the former exhibitions. Since that time troupe after troupe have come over—one alone numbered 200 strong—and appeared at all the leading music-halls in the country. During the boom it was estimated that over £100,000 was paid in salaries to these performers.

After classical dancing came the rage for Apache dances. This was a "dance of the criminals," and showed how life was led in the underworld of Paris.

During the last two years, of course, we had the ragtime dance craze. All the most crazy acrobatics,

"The Yankee Tangle" is an example of the crazy acrobatic dances which the ragtime craze gave us.

"raggy" revolutions, and grotesque glides it was possible to devise were performed at the music-halls. One of these was the "Yankee Tangle," given by Mr. Fred Farren and Ida Crispi at the Empire. Now we have the Tango craze. It is hard to say how long it will last.

The difficulty is that there are so many varieties of it. Some experts say it should be danced in a slow, stately manner, and makes an ideal ballroom dance, while others declare it is nothing if not danced vigorously.

And when the Tango eventually goes, as some day it must, what will take its place?

THE FOUR POSTER—(*Continued from p. 610*).

Then rose Mr. Hunt, wide-eyed.

"Oh, but 'ere, I sye!" he exclaimed. "'Ere's one of us sleeping in this ma'ogany man-trap to-night."

Mr. Felthorpe's face was a picture of distress, but Grimwood broke into a raucous laugh.

"I'm booked for the man-trap, as you call it," said he scornfully. "I'm not to be frightened by old women's tales. I shall sleep there all right, but," he added, looking around threateningly, "no hanky-panky tricks, mind. I haven't a horse-pistol, but I've got a revolver in my bag, and I shan't hesitate to use it on any ghost that comes crawling around me"—and he fixed a choleric eye on Mr. Bunting.

"But, gentlemen, gentlemen," remonstrated John Holt, "there is really no necessity for all this."

Mr. Grimwood rose.

"I am going to bed," he said abruptly, "and I'll ask you all to stay here until I am in my room and the door locked. I mean to prove the foolishness of all this superstitious tommy-rot! 'Night, all!" he concluded curtly, and left the room followed by the landlord.

The latter reappeared a few minutes later, looking somewhat grave and preoccupied. He reported that Mr. Grimwood had retired and locked his door. Mr. Simes announced that the rest of the party were going to stay up until twelve.

"Kindly turn out the gas when you leave, then, gentlemen," said Holt. "And I'll wish you good-night."

A silence fell on the little party, Mr. Felthorpe kept murmuring vague regrets at having told the story; the Scotsman fell asleep, his patriarchal head on the table and Mr. Bunting fidgeted with the poker. The wind and sleet seemed more in evidence than ever.

"It is just on twelve," observed Mr. Simes at last, with a terrific yawn. "We may as well——"

He was interrupted by a piercing cry from above—the scream of a man in terror. All leapt to their feet.

"Grimwood!" gasped Mr. Simes.

The whole party made a rush for the door, Mr. Bunting leading. They found John Holt pale and trembling outside the door of Grimwood's room.

"I—I have knocked——" he stammered.

Suddenly the door burst open and Mr. Grimwood himself, scantily attired, stood before them. His large, flabby face was chalk-white, and his huge form shook like an aspen.

"Thank goodness you're alive," cried Mr. Simes. "What was it, old man?"

"It's—it's the devil, I think!" panted the now anything but fierce-eyed man. "I heard it with my own ears. I'd never have believed it else," and he stared around wildly. By degrees they calmed him and extracted a more or less coherent account of his experience, which appeared to be as follows: He had turned out the light and got into bed, and was just on the point of dozing off when there fell on his ears a deep booming sound, as that of a distant bell.

As the last one died away there came a series of hollow groans, seemingly from beneath the bed. His flesh crept, and he lay listening breathlessly. Then a sepulchral voice repeated the lines:

"Who slumbers twixt my corners four,
Shall taste of Death ere Yule is o'er."

There followed more groans, concluding with a horrible, low, gurgling sound as of someone being strangled.

"I am as good as a dead man, I know it!" concluded Mr. Grimwood wildly.

"Nonsense," said Mr. Simes soothingly. "You didn't 'slumber' there anyway."

"No, that's true," cried half-a-dozen voice. "Good for you, Simey," added Mr. Bunting approvingly; but Mr. Grimwood shook his head mournfully. They had wrapped him in a blanket, and he looked a woebegone figure.

Led by the intrepid Bunting, they entered the room, lit the gas, and thoroughly examined everything, even to the bedding itself. Nothing unusual was discovered.

Mr. Felthorpe took it upon himself to roll back the carpet and go over the flooring foot by foot. But all to no result. Then all returned to the smokeroom, and, there being a mutual desire for companionship, discussed the mystery far into the small hours.

* * * * *

A week later, in an obscure *café* in Soho, two men sat together over a bottle of Italian vintage. One was Mr. Partington and the other Mr. Augustus Rippington Felthorpe, without his glasses, and also lacking the high tenor voice.

"Then it's all right?" said Mr. Felthorpe.

His companion chuckled.

"Quite. I think Holt would have paid me to take it away if I had chosen to hold out. As it was, I paid him just one-quarter of what he refused first of all. And now, let me see, I owe you two guineas—and exes."

"Three quid in all," said Mr. Felthorpe briskly. "Thanks. No receipt necessary, I suppose?"

"I think not." The old dealer chuckled again.

"I had a full account from John Holt," said he. "You ought to go on the stage, young man."

The other grinned.

"Why not make a combine of it," he returned. "I with my yarns and you with that patent adjustable gramaphone of yours. By-the-way, you got it again all right, I suppose?"

"Quite easily," replied Mr. Partington. "Five minutes alone in the room was sufficient."

He gave another of his dry chuckles.

"Yes, Science is a fine thing when allied to art."

"And artfulness," added Mr. Augustus Rippington Felthorpe, draining his glass.

The Christmas ROYAL you should not miss For it teaches you the Mistletoe kiss!

LEFT ON AN ISLAND SINCE 1912.

The prize of £1 1s. for the best account of what I would tell a man, who had been left on a desert island since December 31st of 1912, about 1913, has been awarded to Mr. C. F. PAYNE, 312 Lowick Road, Tooting, London, S.W.

You wish to know something of the world's events during 1913? Well, in March the world was shocked by the news of the tragic fate of Captain Scott and his gallant companions who perished on their journey from the South Pole.

The Balkan War was brought to an end after a long Conference held in London.

Oxford won the Boat Race; Kent the County Cricket Championship; Aston Villa defeated Sunderland in the Cup Final; and Carpentier, the French boxer, defeated Bombardier Wells.

The Derby was sensational owing to the disqualification of the favourite, Craganour, who was first past the post, thus giving place to Aboyeur, an outsider; and likewise for the mad attempt of a Suffragette to stop the race by dashing at the King's horse, and bringing down both horse and jockey, who, fortunately, was only slightly injured. The Suffragette died some days later, and had an imposing funeral.

The year has witnessed a remarkable number of fatal accidents on English railways, the most disastrous being Aisgill Moor (sixteen killed); Liverpool (six killed); Waterloo Junction (three killed).

Greatest of all disasters throughout the world was the Senghenydd Colliery explosion, by which about 430 miners were entombed in a burning pit.

Tragedies of the Air.

Germany has lost two of her gigantic Zeppelin airships, one being destroyed in the North Sea, when fourteen were drowned, the other bursting into flames when in mid-air, killing thirty of the occupants. England had to deplore the loss of Colonel Cody who, together with his passenger, was killed whilst testing a new machine. Several Army airmen also lost their lives. On the other hand, M. Pegoud (France) performed at Brooklands the amazing feats of "Looping the loop" and "flying upside down."

Coming to happier events, Prince Arthur of Connaught wedded the Duchess of Fife in October. Abroad the Kaiser's daughter married Prince Ernest of Cumberland; ex-King Manoel of Portugal married Princess Victoria of Hohenzollern.

Another feature of the year has been the activity of the Suffragettes, evidenced by the burning of country mansions, railway stations, and so on, and adopting the hunger strike when in prison, so that Parliament passed the Cat-and-Mouse Act, providing for the release of women when dangerously ill, to be re-arrested after recuperation.

We Owe a Lot to Wireless.

The committee appointed to inquire into the dealings of several Ministers in the shares of the Marconi Company, when the Government was considering the placing of a contract with the latter, vindicated the Ministers of corruption, and a few months later Sir Rufus Isaacs, the chief witness, was appointed Lord Chief Justice as successor to Lord Alverstone, on the latter's retirement.

The burning of the emigrant ship *Volturno* in mid-Atlantic, when about 125 lives were lost, was notable for the fact that but for wireless telegraphy, which enabled a fleet of ocean liners to reach the vessel in time, she would have disappeared with over 400 souls without leaving a trace of her end.

The year has marked a new era in shipbuilding, our latest battleship, *Queen Elizabeth*, adaptable for the use of oil fuel, being launched. The Hamburg-Amerika Line launched a vessel even larger than the ill-fated *Titanic*.

Home Rule has been passed by the Commons, and Sir Edward Carson has identified himself with the Revolt of Ulster to the extent of raising armed forces to resist any attempt made by the Government to enforce Home Rule upon Ulster.

In the summer a strike broke out amongst the transport workers of Dublin under the leadership of James Larkin. The strike still goes on, distress being so acute that several food ships have been sent from England.

Another Mexican Revolution has occurred resulting in the election of General Huerta as President, much to the chagrin of Uncle Sam.

Buckingham Palace has been provided with a beautiful façade in white Portland stone, and to give expression to his appreciation of the work his Majesty entertained at dinner 500 of the workmen.

WHEN FATHER CARVED THE TURKEY.

The prize of £1 1s. for the best set of verses commencing with the above line has been awarded to Mr. W. H. LEESE, 13 Marsden Road, East Dulwich, S.E.

When father carved the turkey,
And with sharp knife set to work, he
Placed the bird, with movements jerky,
On the floor;
And as we all grew fretful,
And gazed at him, regretful,
Then pa was quite forgetful,
For he swore.

With vigour he attacked it,
Insulted it, and whacked it,
With wondrous weapons hacked it;
In alarm
We brought him bludgeons, maces,
Chisels, axes, bits and braces,
But the turkey still could face his
Strong right arm.

Not ma-in-law's persistence,
Not extraneous assistance,
Could vanquish the resistance
Of that fowl;
And our meal was devastated,
And our hunger not abated,
And the baby aggravated
To a howl.

So we gazed upon it madly,
And though we hungered badly,
'Twas long before we sadly
Ceased to rave;
In procession ostentatious,
With reflections most ungracious,
We laid it in a spacious
Garden grave.

THE MAN THEY RAPPED IN.

The prize of £1 1s. for the most pathetic Christmas incident has been awarded to Mr. George BLADEN, 134 Floyer Road, Small Heath, B'ham.

[When a man has broken a rule and cast a slur on his department, it is the custom in some factories for all his comrades to rap him in when he arrives by banging on their benches with hammers, or whatever tools they may be using. Likewise, if a comrade is sacked, and deserves it, they show their approval by rapping him out.]

It was Friday night. Christmas Day happened to fall on the Sunday. The boss came into our workshop.

"Anybody who is locked out in the morning will get a good rap in, I hope," said he with a smile.

We all managed to get there on the Saturday morning except one youngish fellow, a widower with a little girl of seven; we all knew Dolly, as she brought her dad's dinner four days out of the six.

The boss came in saying, "Well, it certainly is a surprise. All here except Claythorn, and I've never known him late before."

At ten minutes past the hour Blake happened to look out of the window, and turning to the boss he said, "Claythorn's below, sir."

"Oh, let him in then," said the boss, as he picked up his heaviest hammer. "All together, boys," he added, when Blake left the shop.

We waited for Claythorn to enter the workshop. He came in looking pale and yet resolute; he stood as transfixed while we plied hammer on bench and vice. The din and clatter was terrific; we grinned and laughed. We stopped.

Claythorn turned to the boss, saying: "Boss, you've seen fit to rap me in, now rap me out!" He seemed to spin on his heels and fell to the floor.

The boss stooped and shouted: "A doctor, quick!" But I could see, for one, it was too late.

The doctor came. "Poor fellow," he said. "His heart, you know. I was called to his little one about an hour ago; she was fetching some milk, and got run over by a lorry. She died in her father's arms before he left for work. He probably ran. I had warned him." The doctor had gone.

"Put Claythorn in my office, boys," said the boss. "I'm going for the police." He left us to perform a sad rite.

Blake watched the boss go, and slipping on his coat ran to Claythorn's house. What for? Well, he was shown into the little death chamber, where the boss stood beside Dolly's cot talking to Claythorn's sister, an elderly woman, saying, "Spare no expense, Miss Claythorn, it's all up to me." He spoke to Blake, too, who returned, and was very busy writing a notice which read:

"Christmas Eve, 19—.—There will be no rapping in or out for the future.—By order."

We knew the boss was fining himself pretty heavily, and I know that in ten homes Christmas Day was very quiet.

Kissing Under the Mistletoe.

How Kulate and Osk Made History.

The prize of £1 1s. for this purely imaginary story of how kissing under the mistletoe originated has been awarded to Mr. L. MACLAURIN, 112 South View Road, Sharrow.

It was a Christmas party, and the talk had turned upon the subject of kissing.

"Now, Professor," coaxed a charming blonde, turning to a benevolent-looking old gentleman, "you know most things. Tell us how kissing under the mistletoe originated."

Professor Knowitall, a twinkle in his eye, glanced at the bunch of mistletoe beneath the chandelier, the cause of the topic.

"Kissing under the mistletoe, my dear young lady, was originated"—he stroked his chin—"oh, yes, I remember," he smiled. "The latest excavators at Nipur, the oldest known city in the world, discovered a tablet on which was inscribed the origin of the custom of kissing under the mistletoe."

"How lovely!" gushed one young lady.

"According to the tablet," commenced the Professor, "it was in the time of the Pre-Adamites, when the people who inhabited the land were cave dwellers. Nose rubbing was the common form of salutation, the gentle friction causing great joy to the participators."

"Ugh!" shuddered a sensitive girl, clasping the arm of the nearest young man.

Two Terrible Noses.

Ignoring the interruption, the Professor continued: "The cave dwellers lived in amity till a terrible calamity visited the community. Konki and Probiscuss, the leading men in the national customs, were stricken down with a great sorrow.

"At last the secret leaked out. Kulate, the new baby daughter of Konki, had an absolutely flat nose; never would she enjoy the chaste delights of nose irritation, tears of joy would never tremble in her pansy eyes when she saluted a friend.

"But worse news came like a thunderbolt to disturb the general harmony. Osk, the baby son of Probiscuss, suffered under a nose which was so very snub that it was really no nose at all.

"A pow-wow of the elders of the Boko society discussed the matter, and it was resolved that Kulate and Osk should be allowed to live in the hope that they would see the error of their ways, and grow proper noses like everybody else.

"But Nature was in one of her freak moods, and reversed her usual procedure. As the years passed their noses receded further into obscurity, and their lips protruded. They were pariahs. None of the high-toned Bokos would associate with them.

"Again the elders met in solemn conclave, and it was decided to allow them to live till the time of Saturnalia, and then, when the Christmas time arrived, to wipe away the reproach at the evening sacrifice.

The First Kiss of All.

"Fastened to a patriarchal oak near to each other, Kulate and Osk awaited their doom. Their eyes downcast. Curiosity to examine her companion caused Kulate to raise her eyes. So fascinated was she by Osk's upstanding figure, and the curious light in his eyes, that she never noticed his flat nose at all.

"Osk was equally attracted by the moving light in the liquid depths of Kulate's pansy eyes. Above their heads on the oak tree a strange parasite was growing, known to us as the mistletoe.

"Whether it was the full moon, the glamour of the evening, the mistletoe, or a hereditary impulse will never be known. But all at once an irresistible impulse came over them to rub noses, oblivious of the fact that it was an impossibility.

"They pressed forward, and their lips met in the first, the most delicious kiss the world ever knew. It was Kismet——

"Here the tablet had crumbled away, and no further fragment could be found," finished the Professor.

A burst of applause greeted the end of the story.

"Oral tradition," commented the Professor, "passed on the custom, and gave us a word in vogue at the present time.

"From Osk and Kulate we get the word osculate—to salute with a kiss."

"Osk," whispered the demure young lady in pink, looking wistfully at the mistletoe.

"Kulate," replied the fair young man. They did.

All the Hon. John Collier's most famous pictures are reproduced in the Christmas PEARSON'S. Now on sale.

COMPLETE SHORT STORY.

The Story of his Ill-fated Expedition to his Nephew's.

By C. MALCOLM HINCKS.

MR. EDMUND TANKERTON paused at the entrance to the mews which were situated behind Clansdale Road, Kensington, and gazed a little apprehensively at the dirty wall on the one side of the narrow lane, and the stables—mostly garages now—on the other.

"Confound the fog!" he growled. "It's difficult to feel Christmassy on a night like this. Still, I must see it through now. How they'll laugh over the joke to-morrow! Besides, I told Martin that I'd close the window when I left, and I should be very sorry to get him into trouble!"

Mr. Tankerton was a somewhat portly man of about forty, with a pompous air and a dignity befitting a prosperous banker, and a director of half a dozen sound limited companies. For the moment his dignity had deserted him. It was half-past eleven on the night of Christmas Eve, and he felt he was going to make a fool of himself, but it would be a good joke, and Edmund Tankerton loved a joke at Christmas time, as much as he despised it at other seasons of the year.

Roy Tankerton, his nephew, lived in Clansdale Road, and Roy's children were responsible for the esteemed banker being out in this damp fog at such an hour on Christmas Eve.

The previous night Mr. Tankerton had dined with his nephew and his pretty young wife, and he was to spend Christmas Day with them. He had asked Stella (aged five) what she thought Santa Claus would leave her, and Stella had told him that she thought "daddy wouldn't run to the doll's house she wanted." Master Jack, aged seven, had laughed contemptuously.

"There ain't no Santa Claus," he had said firmly, repeating verbatim the declaration of the under-parlourmaid, and had been promptly sent to bed for his grammatical lapse.

But it had pained Edmund John Tankerton, and he had thought sadly upon the scepticism and materialism of the modern child as he had driven back to his comfortable chambers, which adjoined a big hotel facing the Strand, and overlooked a not particularly picturesque portion of the River Thames.

And now he was about to convince his small nephew and niece that Santa Claus did exist, and at dinner on Christmas Day what a story he would have to tell! How the rooms would echo with laughter and applause. He would be the hero of the day, and he would score heavily off the younger generation, who treated with disdain many of the fine old traditions of the past.

It was this thought that caused him to take heart as he groped along the wall for the fifth door, and the large bag that he carried seemed to become heavier every yard. The sharp hoot of a motor-car entering the mews caused him to start and lose count. Wearily he retraced his steps to the entrance of the mews, and recommenced his careful counting.

The entrance to the mews was from a side street which ran off the Clansdale Road. Each house had a high door let into the wall which gave access from what was by courtesy called a garden to the mews. These doors were useful for chauffeurs living in the houses; the dustman also used them, and such inhabitants who took an interest in their "gardens" found them handy when carts arrived with gravel, mould, or turf.

Mr. Tankerton had carefully counted the houses from the side street. His nephew's was the fifth house. Each house in the terraced row was the counterpart of the other, and each had a door in the wall communicating with the mews. It was therefore a very simple matter to deduce that the fifth door from the entrance to the mews was the door he wanted—a door usually bolted, but, thanks to Martin, his nephew's butler, was to be left unfastened, as was the window giving access to the morning-room, which was placed at the back of the house.

"Now," said Mr. Tankerton as he opened a green door and found himself upon a narrow gravel path, with an unlighted house looming up through the fog, "I'll put on my disguise. It's fortunate that they've retired early. Martin said it was the usual custom. An invaluable man is Martin. I must tip him handsomely to-morrow!"

It was a favourite axiom of Mr. Tankerton's that a thing that was worth doing at all was worth doing well, and as he paused at the foot of the iron steps, leading up to the balcony window outside the morning-room, he took from the big bag first an electric torch then a long red cloak, which he proceeded to put over his overcoat, then a grey beard that he looped over his ears, and then a round red cap, trimmed with white fur.

Having transformed himself into the semblance of the mythical Santa Claus, he took a carefully folded sack from the bag, opened it out, and filled it with dolls, clockwork engines, and clockwork motor-cars, and other toys that had appealed to him during the half-hour of his valuable time that morning that he had spent in an Oxford Street toyshop, then, swinging the sack on his shoulder, and holding the electric torch before him, he cautiously proceeded up the iron staircase.

The window was a tall one, almost on a level with the little railed platform at the top of the staircase. Martin had made things easy for him; not only had he left the window unfastened, but the lower sash was thrown up, so all he had to do was to stoop down and enter the room.

"Nah, then, wot's your game?"

Mr. Tankerton, on rising from his stooping posit on in the morning-room of his nephew's house, almost dropped his sack, turned ghastly pale, and little beads of perspiration stood out on his forehead as he felt a revolver placed by no means gently against it.

"P-put away that weapon," he gasped, "or I shall summon assistance!"

The owner of the revolver laughed softly.

"Come off it!" he growled. "I don't want no

Suddenly the room was illuminated. The military-looking gentleman had barked his shins against a chair and was vowing vengeance upon someone.

swank from a dud amateur doin' the Santa Clause act! I got in 'ere first, and I'm goin' to crack this crib without assistance, so you go and do your Farver Christmas act somewhere else!"

By the light of his torch the astounded Mr. Tankerton saw that his companion was a burly, beetle-browed man, with a revolver in one hand and a dark lantern in the other; a jemmy protruded from one of the capacious pockets of his coat.

"D-do you take me for a burglar?" gasped the banker as a light began to dawn upon him.

"Burglar!" sneered the burly man. "You ain't fit to be called that! A dud crook, that's wot you are, comin' blunderin' in just as I was goin' to get busy. Blimey! There's someone coming! I'm goin' behind that screen. It's a fair cop for you, my lad, but breathe a word about me and you're a deader. I'll have you covered all the time!"

Mr. Tankerton was dazed. He half turned to dart through the open window, thought of the beetle-browed man with the revolver, who might misunderstand his action, glanced wildly round, dropped his sack of toys to the ground, and then before he could solve the problem before him the door opened, there was a click, the room was flooded with light, and he was seized by two constables, whilst another darted into the room, *via* the window.

"A clean cop," said the man who had entered by the window, and grinned at the appearance of Santa Claus in the grip of his two comrades. "The chap's faked himself up well, too. He's left his bag and hat at the foot of the steps."

"My name is Tankerton," said the banker, with a nervous glance in the direction of the screen—"Edmund Tankerton. This house belongs to my nephew, and I came here as—a—er—joke. I was going to wake the little boy and girl and give them the presents you will find in this sack."

"That's all tommy-rot, constable," said a voice from the door. And Mr. Tankerton glared at a military-looking man in shirt and trousers who had suddenly appeared. "This house belongs to some friends of ours, and my wife and I have rented it from them for a fortnight, whilst they are at their country place for Christmas. Their name is Fordell, not Tankerton, and they have no young children! My servant told me you had caught a burglar, so I came down to have a look at him; but I—er—did not expect to see this."

The military-looking man, with very bad taste, burst into a laugh. Mr. Tankerton glared wildly round the room. He was not very familiar with his nephew's morning-room, but, with a sinking heart, he noticed some sporting prints which he knew Roy's wife would never have allowed in her home, and realised that he had entered the wrong house.

"Sir," he said, with as much dignity as he could assume, "if you will kindly instruct these policemen to cease treating me as though I were a thief, I will explain what has——"

Click!

The room was plunged into darkness. There was a scuffling sound, a shout of warning, then a crash.

"The light, sir—quick!" called one of the policemen, holding Mr. Tankerton. "This chap's got a pal!"

The military-looking man was fumbling for the switch. A sense of great relief came to the unfortunate banker as he realised what had happened. The beetle-browed ruffian who had threatened him had hidden behind the screen, close to the switch. Evidently he had seen a chance of escape, stretched out his arm, and——

Suddenly the room was illuminated. The military-looking man had barked his shins against a chair, and was vowing vengeance upon someone. The policeman who had entered by the window was sitting up on the floor rubbing his head.

"He knocked me down," he said, and glanced at Mr. Tankerton. "There's two of 'em, though; it was this chap I saw enter the door in the wall."

The constables looked at each other. It was more than probable that the other man, with the fog in his favour, had succeeded in making good his escape, and the theory of a bird in the hand being worth two in the bush seemed to hold good.

It was then that Mr. Tankerton, feeling perfectly safe, turned to the angry officer, who was still vowing vengeance upon the man who was responsible for his having been roused from his bed just as he had dropped off to sleep, and had caused him to bark his shins against that confounded chair.

"Now, sir," he said airily, "I can speak freely, and this unfortunate misunderstanding will be cleared up. When you first came in I was in peril of my life. The man who has just escaped was covering me with a revolver, and——"

"Great Scot!" gasped the officer, "the man's mad. He's a raving lunatic!"

"Not 'im, sir," said one of the constables. "He's a flash crook, that's what he is. This game's been played before now round Christmas-time. Got up as Santa Claus and pretend to be in the wrong house if anyone comes in, that's the little game. This chap evidently expected a good haul, and brought a pal with him!"

Mr. Tankerton crimsoned with rage.

"Sir," he said, with dignity, addressing the military-looking man, "I have been the victim of a——"

"By gad!" said that noble officer, whose eyes were fixed on the mantelpiece. "The beggar's got two silver candlesticks—big, handsome things—that were

Mr. Tankerton, with a bullet lodged in a fleshy portion of his anatomy, fell from the wall into the arms of his pursuers.

Simple Conjuring Tricks are explained in this week's SCOUT. They'll amuse your friends at Christmas.

standing at either end of the mantelpiece. There was a silver cigarette-box, too!"

"You can bet your life his pal's taken them, sir," said a constable. "I should say this chap was a toff come down in the world, and——"

It was too much for Mr. Tankerton. That he, Edmund Tankerton, the highly-respected banker, should be suspected of being a somewhat bungling accomplice of the beetle-browed man, who had nearly scared him out of his life. Then the full horror of the situation dawned on him. This angry officer was but a temporary dweller in the house; to him the name of Tankerton meant nothing. The police would never believe his story; he would be taken to the police-station like a criminal. At the thought of a night in the cells the banker lost his head.

One of the constables was holding him by the sleeve of the loose red cloak, the others were examining the room. With wonderful agility for a man of his years, Mr. Tankerton leapt to the window, leaving the red flannel cloak in the grasp of the astonished policeman.

He knocked his head against a sash of the window and almost fell down the flight of steps. A police whistle shrilled out in the cold, damp air, but, gasping for breath, he ran towards the door through which he had entered.

"Confound them!" gasped Mr. Tankerton, and came into violent collision with a wall. Recovering himself, he groped desperately for the door, and then his hand touched the top of the wall, and he realised that he had lost his bearings in the fog, and was standing by a side wall instead of the bottom one, with the convenient door.

If only he could climb the wall he would be in his nephew's garden. Martin would have left the window of the morning-room open, and, once inside the house Roy would be summoned and everything explained.

"I must do it!" he muttered hoarsely as the whistle shrilled out again. He heard voices behind him, and, nerved to desperation, he leapt upwards and gained the top of the wall.

For a moment he paused to gain his breath. His back was towards the house, and his eyes were upon the dull, yellow lights below him.

Then came the sound of a window being thrown up, followed by what seemed a low whistle, and then a scream of agony, and Mr. Tankerton, with a bullet lodged in a fleshy portion of his anatomy, fell from the wall into the arms of his pursuers.

The constable held him firmly.

"No more larks, my lad," he said grimly.

"I'm wounded!" gasped Mr. Tankerton. "Take me to a hospital!"

"Got him, constable?" said a voice from the window. "Winged the beggar, by gad; saw him fall. A jolly good shot considering the fog, and——"

"Roy!" almost screamed the distressed banker.

"Great Scot! Uncle! Hold on, constable! I'll be down in a minute!"

The astounded constable turned to his comrades who came running up.

"Gent next door plugged him with an air-gun," he said, "then called him uncle. He's coming down."

"Y-you shall suffer for this!" gasped Mr. Tankerton, writhing in agony. "You've allowed a desperate character to escape and subjected me to gross indignity!"

The policemen glanced uncomfortably at each other, but before they could speak a young man's head peered over the wall.

"What on earth does this mean?" he gasped.

The three policemen, the military-looking man, and Mr. Tankerton all commenced to explain. Mr. Roy Tankerton, his eyes fixed upon the cap upon the banker's head, began to wonder if he were really awake or the victim of some strange dream.

Then suddenly the military-looking man burst into a loud laugh.

"By gad! What a joke!" he said.

"Joke?" gasped Mr. Tankerton. "Joke?"

* * * *

The military-looking man made peace over a decanter of whisky; the constables drank beer downstairs. A generous distribution of silver had insured the banker from being drawn into publicity, and Roy Tankerton had removed the bullet he had lodged in his wealthy relative.

"Well," said the military-looking man, finishing his drink, "I expect my wife will be worrying about me now, and I must be off. Good night and a Merry Christmas, Santa Claus! Ha, ha! It's the joke of—— I—er—beg your pardon! Mum's the word, sir; mum's the word!"

"You see, uncle," exclaimed the host, "old Blander, at the first house, had his door bricked up as he never uses the mews, so what you thought was the fifth door was the sixth, and as Colonel——"

"I have no desire to have the Colonel's remark repeated," said the banker, with dignity.

* * * *

Mr. Edmund Tankerton's little niece and nephew wondered how it was that their uncle's presents were found in a sack in their room, looking somewhat the worse for wear.

They also wondered why their uncle sat sideways in his chair at dinner on Christmas Day.

One of the twenty hampers we are giving away this week.

20 XMAS HAMPERS

To be Won This Week.

JOIN OUR CHRISTMAS CLUB AND ONE MAY BE YOURS.

We are offering twenty hampers this week. Each hamper contains a plump turkey, a large Christmas pudding, a rich Christmas cake, crackers, preserved fruits, sweetmeats, and so on, which will make your Christmas table a joyous one of the good old-fashioned sort.

To win one of these excellent hampers, all you have to do is to send in a "Line-rick," which is explained below, and if yours is one of the twenty best received, your name will be announced as one of the winners, and when the time comes a hamper will be dispatched to your home. There is nothing to pay to join our Christmas club, all you have to do is to go in and win.

The hampers are being prepared by Messrs. Lipton Ltd., and are of the best quality throughout.

THIS IS HOW YOU MAKE A LINE-RICK.

You take any one line in this copy of *P.W.*—it doesn't matter if it is in the reading matter or in the advertisements—and you make up a second line to rhyme with it.

To show you exactly what is meant, you will find on page 612, column 2, line 73, the line:

"*He seemed to spin on his heels and fell to the floor.*"

and you add a second rhyming line, such, for example, as:

"*And he vowed that the Tango he'd never do more.*"

You can, if you like, choose your line from one of the titles of the articles or stories in this number. Suppose you choose the title to the article on the same page:

"*Kissing under the mistletoe.*"

Then you could add the line:

"*Is sure to make your party go.*"

You may choose a line from the advertisement columns if you wish. Here is a line taken from the Peps advertisement on page 629.

"*A crowded tram or tram without a germ.*"

and you add a second line:

"*Is as rare as a garden without a worm.*"

Such a couplet as this we call a Line-rick.

Now set to work to make a Line-rick.

To the readers from whom the Editor receives what are considered to be the twenty best Line-ricks will be awarded Christmas hampers.

When you have chosen your line, write it in full on the coupon below, together with the number of page, column, and line, then fill in your second rhyming line, your name and address, and put it in an envelope addressed to the Editor, *Pearson's Weekly*, 17 Henrietta Street, London, W.C., and post to arrive not later than first post Tuesday morning, December 2nd. Mark your envelope "Christmas Line-rick No. 6" in the top left-hand corner.

You may send in as many attempts as you like, provided each is on a separate coupon.

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Page..... *Column*..... *Line*.....

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Name .....

Address.....

THERE IS NO ENTRY FEE.

RESULT OF CHRISTMAS HAMPER LINE-RICK No. 3.

A Christmas Hamper has been awarded to each of the following and will be forwarded a few days before Christmas:

Alfred Andrews, 39 Victoria Road, Bushey, Herts.
Mrs. Childs, Sorrento Road, Dalkey, Co Dublin.
J. Clapinson, Princess Street, Edgware Road.
George H. Clay, 3 Chaleureux Terrace, Belmont, Malvern.
Arthur Creaton, 30 Dorset Street, London, W.
Patrick Carr, 84 Joy Street, Belfast.
Arthur J. Green, 28 Norwood Road, Stretford.
A. E. Jenkins, 152 Mackintosh Place, Cardiff.
W. Power, 16 Drayton Road, West Ealing, W.
J. H. Stein, Dalmeny, near Edinburgh.

WARSHIP TO THE RESCUE!

The £1 1s. prize for the most exciting Christmas incident has been awarded to L. C. Fowler, 29 Beatrice Street, Kempston, Bedford.

CHRISTMAS Day of 1906 dawned with a howling wind and a lurid red sky, and the Channel Fleet, sheltered behind the breakwater at Vigo, bowed majestically in response to the huge waves that swept through the entrance.

There were no signs of festivities ashore; the Spaniards do not celebrate Christmas, and we were just congratulating ourselves on having a Christmas in harbour.

The inside of H.M.S. *Triumph* looked like fairyland; paper chains, evergreens, and flags, with coloured electric lights, had transformed the mess deck into a hall of beauty, while the mess tables were loaded with every delicacy—plum puddings, turkeys, mince pies, and sweets of every description.

Outside the storm increased, a veritable hurricane was blowing, and just as we sat down to breakfast, a wireless message came through that the Austrian liner *Franz Josef* had broken down about eighty miles off Ferrol, and needed assistance. The *Triumph* was, at that time, the fastest battleship in the fleet, so the Admiral ordered us to proceed out to sea and assist the crippled liner. Outside the storm raged in all its fury, huge waves swept the *Triumph* from stem to stern as she battled, head to wind, towards Ferrol.

Inside the ship the scene was indescribable. The *Triumph* is at best a very bad sea boat, and tons of water swept through her gun ports, washing down our decorations. We had nowhere to put them, there was not a dry place in the ship, so that plum puddings and mince pies were chasing one another in about four feet of water, with electric lights, flags, and loaves of bread following up in the rear.

I dined off two pennyworth of cheese, and I had a bloater for tea. About six in the evening we sighted the liner, who signalled that she could manage without help at present, but that we had better stand by her.

The night came on, and we threw searchlights on to the liner and maintained our dogged pace alongside of her all night, pitching and tossing in the foaming element. I do not believe we could have given any help had it been necessary; we certainly could not have lowered any boats, and if the inside of the *Franz Josef* had any more water in it than ours, her passengers must have been drowned.

All Christmas night we stood by her, wet through to the skin, and Boxing Day broke with no signs of abatement in the weather. Six more hours of heaving and pitching, and we sighted Cherbourg, the liner's destination. We parted at her own request, and staggered on towards Vigo. As soon as we rounded the breakwater, the massed bands of the fleet played, "See the Conquering Hero Comes," and the Admiral signalled "Welcome, *Triumph*, hope you have had a merry Christmas."

"Thank you," replied our skipper, "we have."

Philip Gibbs and Robert Barr, Writers for the NOVEL are.

When My Christmas Was Spoilt

Specially Illustrated for "P.W." by Popular Artists of To-Day.

Starr Wood's Christmas was spoilt when an unkind friend presented him with a turkey bred on eugenic principles. It ruined all the cutlery in the house.

Nothing has ever annoyed Esmond more than a surprise visit from his neighbour, who dropped in from the flat above, during the Christmas dinner.

"I can never stand the agonising after effects," says Razor.

Harry Rowntree's complaint, which spoilt last Christmas for him, speaks for itself.

"The Glad Hand" always saddens Alfred Leete's 25th.

W. Heath Robinson found he had lost his appetite when he discovered something in the Christmas pudding which was not on the menu.

Mr. Arthur Collins lets you into some of the secrets of Drury Lane in the Christmas PEARSON'S. Now on sale.

OUR SERIES OF TINY CLUES TO GREAT CRIMES.

The Clue of the False Mummy

By JOHN LAURENCE.

On the bed in a well-furnished bedroom in a house on the outskirts of the little town of Lys, in the north of France, a young girl lay dying.

She was the daughter of Baron Mescalier, who, together with the doctor, was sitting by the bedside, watching and hoping against hope. For the last three nights the Baron had been unable to rest, and now, worn out with anxiety and want of sleep, he sat there, his heart full of despair, yet a smile on his lips, trying to cheer up the one being he loved.

"Will she live through the night, doctor?" he whispered.

"Yes, I think so," replied Dr. Vir. "Here, drink this, and go and lie down. If anything should happen I'll call you."

Left alone with his patient, Dr. Vir made himself as comfortable as he could in one of the armchairs in the room, and slept till about seven the following morning.

The girl was then sleeping peacefully, and seemed, if anything, to be a little better than when her father had left her. The doctor quietly drew up the blind letting the September sun pour into the little bedroom. It lighted up the patient's face and made her hair shine like the golden corn in the fields that stretched away in the distance.

The Cruel Murder.

The doctor tip-toed to one corner of the room and picked up a small cylinder. It looked exactly like a cylinder of oxygen, such as is used in the last extremity to try to save a person's life.

Quickly he crossed to the bed and soon a slight hissing sound, as of escaping gas, indicated that he had decided the last measure of all must be used.

The girl on the bed stirred uneasily, and her face went a horrible pasty white. She seemed to breathe with greater difficulty than ever. The doctor suddenly put down the cylinder, rushed into the next room, and woke up Baron Mescalier.

"I am afraid she is going," he whispered. "You must come quickly."

The distracted father was only just in time to see his daughter breathe her last. The end had come so suddenly that even the doctor seemed puzzled. In fact, he admitted himself baffled by the girl's illness.

She was only nineteen, and the first symptoms of anything wrong had been a sore throat. This rapidly grew worse, and though Dr. Vir gave his patient medicine and directed her to gargle her throat, and came to see her half a dozen times a day, he was unable to save her.

Red Spots on the Girl's Face and Chest.

After her death a rather curious thing happened. A number of queer reddish spots appeared on the dead girl's face and chest. When the Baron asked Dr. Vir about these spots he replied: "They are a sign of scarlet fever. Though it is very rare, scarlet fever sometimes attacks the internal organs, and that is probably the cause of your daughter's death."

For some weeks the Baron was so grief-stricken that his friends feared for his reason. His daughter's illness had been so short, her death so sudden, that he could hardly believe she had died a natural death.

He could not get out of his mind those queer red spots, and the more he thought about them the more he worried and grew suspicious of foul play. He mentioned his fears to Dr. Vir.

"Nonsense," said the doctor. "You mustn't worry yourself with ideas like that. What you want is a change. You had better get away and have a holiday."

But Baron Mescalier did not have a holiday. Instead, he wrote to his friend, Dr. Lacassagne, a colleague of Professor Reiss, the famous criminologist of Lausanne University. Dr. Lacassagne had acquired as big a reputation for solving puzzling mysteries as any criminal expect, and the Baron felt that if anything were wrong the expert would soon discover it.

It was one evening early in December that Dr. Lacassagne arrived at the little town of Lys, and obtained full particulars of the case.

"Tell me exactly what happened on the last night," he asked the Baron.

"Well, I had not slept for the previous two or three nights, and I was half-mad with anxiety, when Dr. Vir offered to stay up with her all night."

"Was he alone with her all the night?"

"Yes, quite alone. He gave me a sleeping powder so that I could have a little rest. When he awoke me in the morning it was only to tell me that Lola was dying. He said that he had given her oxygen during the night, but that had failed to save her."

"What did Dr. Vir say she died of?"

"At first he said he did not know, and then he said that she had died of internal scarlet fever."

"Internal scarlet fever? Why?"

"Because after Lola was dead a number of queer red spots appeared on her face and chest."

Have you a Blood-stained Handkerchief?

"Ah!"

Dr. Lacassagne seemed puzzled for a moment, but quickly his face cleared as though he had solved the momentary problem that had worried him. Then he made a curious request.

"Have you got any of your daughter's blood—a bloodstained handkerchief, for instance?"

"Curiously enough, I have!" replied Baron Mescalier. "When Lola was being prepared for burial an assistant accidentally cut her wrist with a pair of scissors with which he was cutting a sheet. Dr. Vir wiped her wrist with one of her own handkerchiefs, which I have kept in remembrance of her. I'll let you have it immediately!"

When the Baron had found it, Dr. Lacassagne carefully placed it in a small sterilised case.

"This will help me to say what she really died of," he said, "for certain diseases—typhoid, malarial fever, eczema, and so on—leave traces which can be detected under the microscope. I will examine it this evening and to-morrow we will both go to the vault where your daughter lies, and I will settle your suspicions once and for all, one way or the other."

Before the crime expert saw Baron Mescalier again he had made an extraordinary discovery. She had been murdered in a most ingenious way. Instead of having oxygen given to her, she had been given carbon monoxide—a gas so deadly that inhaling a couple of pints is sufficient to cause death. The blood of anyone who has died from being poisoned by this gas acts in a different way under scientific tests than if they had died from any other cause.

No Body in the Coffin.

"You see you only had Dr. Vir's word that he was giving your daughter oxygen," said Dr. Lacassagne. "As a matter of fact, he deliberately poisoned her. We must now find out why."

"But there is no why!" exclaimed the Baron. "He was as fond of my daughter as myself. He has often been to the vault with me in the last three months and knelt beside the coffin. In fact, we always went together."

"Well, we'll go and see if I am mistaken or not," replied the crime expert.

When they arrived at the vault Dr. Lacassagne carefully examined the coffin with a magnifying glass before he opened it, and then rapidly unscrewed the lid.

The coffin was empty!

The criminologist did not seem surprised, though the father of the dead girl could not restrain his horror and grief. Carefully Dr. Lacassagne cut away some pieces of silk from the lining inside the coffin. He also unscrewed the lock of the door of the vault, took it to pieces, and examined it under his microscope before replacing it.

Before leaving the Baron he asked him one more question.

"Did you have your daughter embalmed?"

"Yes, Dr. Vir suggested it, and as there are no embalmers in a little town like Lys, Dr. Vir himself kindly carried out the embalming process."

"Then his guilt is certain. Everything points to it. First of all, your daughter has been poisoned, and by Dr. Vir. That is certain because he was with her all night. The gas he had given her kills quickly, and he was the only one who could have administered it.

"Secondly, he embalmed your daughter, and now he has stolen her body. You say that he is an Egyptologist. Does he keep mummies?"

"As a rule, he has one or two in his house. He knows a good many people in Cairo, and has mummies sent to him which he sells again to various museums."

"Heavens!" exclaimed Dr. Lascassagne. "That explains all! Dr. Vir is a fiend on earth!"

"Explains all? How?" asked Baron Mescalier.

"Why, the man you trusted, the man you asked to come and save your daughter's life, deliberately poisoned her, embalmed her—you remember he suggested that himself—stole her body, and has probably by now wrapped her up in mummy clothes and sold her as an Egyptian mummy!"

The Baron gave a cry of despair.

"Lacassagne, you're right. He was telling me only recently that he had obtained the mummy of an Egyptian Princess. He has it there now, though he would never let me see it. Oh! if we can only bring it home to him."

Face to Face with Dr. Vir.

"We can do that, I think," replied Dr. Lacassagne. "In the vault I made a number of discoveries. You said that he had accompanied you always to pray by your daughter's coffin. He did that for a double purpose. In the first place, he wanted to obtain an impression of the key of the lock; and in the second, he was afraid to let you enter the vault alone after he had stolen the body.

"Traces of the wax he had used to take an impression of the key remained not only on the key, but also on the lock where it had come off the key. There were other clues which we can test when we have Dr. Vir before us. I found, for example, a number of finger-prints on the glass lid of the inner coffin. But let us go along and interview Dr. Vir. You had better introduce me as an enthusiast on Egyptology. On our way we'll call on the police."

Dr. Lacassagne soon had Dr. Vir talking about his hobby.

"I hear from Baron Mescalier that you have a mummy of an Egyptian Princess. Do you mind us seeing it?"

"Certainly not," replied Dr. Vir. "She is the Princess Nito-kris. But, alas! I shall not have her long for she is already sold to a museum."

As he was speaking, he opened one of the mummy cases in his room. Eagerly the crime expert and Baron Mescalier leant forward as he undid some of the wrappings. Then the Baron heaved a sigh of relief.

He Had Dyed Lola's Hair.

The body in the coffin was obviously not that of his daughter. M'mselle Lola had golden hair, while that of the mummy was black. His daughter had had a fair clear complexion, while that of the mummy was dark, in keeping with its hair.

Dr. Lacassagne bent forward and carefully examined it. Then he turned to the Egyptologist.

"Very interesting indeed, Dr. Vir. But why did you dye this woman's hair?"

Dr. Vir straightened himself up, and was about to speak, when the other blew a shrill blast on a little whistle. The door was flung open, and in rushed a number of gendarmes.

"Arrest that man!" cried Dr. Lacassagne.

"I charge him with the murder of M'mselle Lola Mescalier last September. There is her dead body!" And he pointed dramatically to the so-called mummy of the Princess Nito-kris.

The arrest of Dr. Vir brought to light one of the most remarkable criminals of modern times. He was an extremely clever man, one who was deeply versed in Egyptian lore, and who had acquired a thorough knowledge of the methods of embalming used in Ancient Egypt.

Further investigations proved that he had deliberately murdered at least a dozne women, afterwards embalming their bodies and selling them to various big museums as genuine Egyptian mummies.

Dr. Vir wrote out a full confession of his horrible crimes one night, and was found the following morning dead in his prison-cell.

He had poisoned himself.

(Next week: "The Clue of the Odd-shaped Burn.")

Ladies, don't worry your husbands for votes, Worry them rather to buy you HOME NOTES.

MORE BIG FOOTBALL PRIZES FOR CHRISTMAS.

£500 FOR 20 CORRECT RESULTS. **£400** FOR 19 CORRECT RESULTS. **£300** FOR 18 CORRECT RESULTS.

£200 for 17 CORRECT RESULTS

£100 for 16 CORRECT RESULTS, or the most nearly correct coupon.

We are again offering prizes of £500, £400, £300, £200, £100. Below, you will find a list of matches taking place on Saturday, December 13th. To the competitor who forecasts all these matches correctly we will award the splendid prize of £500. In the event of a tie this sum will be divided. Should no competitor forecast all the matches correctly, the prize of £400 will be awarded to the competitor—or competitors—sending in a coupon containing nineteen correct results. Should this prize not be won, the sum of £300 will be awarded to the competitor—or competitors—sending in a coupon containing eighteen correct results. Again, should this prize not be carried off, the prize of £200 will be paid to the competitor—or competitors—sending in a coupon containing seventeen correct results. In the unlikely event of this prize not being won, we will pay the prize of £100 to the competitor—or competitors—sending in a coupon containing sixteen correct results, or the most nearly correct coupon. Only one prize, whatever the amount, will be paid.

No Goals. No Entry Fee. You may Send as Many Attempts as You Like.

WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO.

On the entry form opposite you will find the names of the clubs taking part in matches to be played on Saturday, Dec. 13th.

You have first of all to make yourself acquainted with the records and capabilities of the various clubs, and decide in each case which club you think will win. Then draw a line in ink through the name of the club which you believe will lose. If, in your opinion, any of the matches will result in a draw, then leave in names of both teams.

This Football Skill Competition has been devised for the amusement of the many tens of thousands of our readers who take a keen interest in Association Football and to enable them to put their knowledge to good account. The prizes offered are enumerated above, and the task set enables competitors to display their skill in following up football, and also fosters their interest in the game.

It so frequently happens that the success of a team is seriously affected by the presence or absence of one particular player or by other local conditions. In order, therefore, to enable individual competitors to exercise their football skill and knowledge to the fullest extent we permit them to send in more than one entry form where they consider it necessary.

Any number of persons can inclose their coupons in one envelope, provided the proper amount of postage is affixed.

CONDITIONS WITH WHICH COMPETITORS MUST COMPLY.

1. The names of the teams which you believe will lose must be crossed out. Where you forecast a draw don't cross out either.
2. Names and addresses must be written in ink in the space provided. Typewriting and blacklead pencil cannot be accepted.
3. When you have filled up the entry form, cut it out and place it in an envelope addressed to the Editor of PEARSON'S WEEKLY, Henrietta Street, London, W.C. Mark your envelope "Football No. 15" in the top left-hand corner. All attempts must arrive not later than first post, Friday, December 12th.
4. Competitors may send in as many entry forms as they wish, and any number of persons can inclose their coupons in one envelope, provided the proper amount of postage is affixed.
5. The prize of **£500** will be awarded to the competitor from whom the Editor receives a coupon containing twenty correct results. Should no competitor forecast all the matches correctly, the prize of **£400** will be awarded to the competitor sending in a coupon containing nineteen correct results. Should this prize not be won, the sum of **£300** will be awarded to the competitor sending in a coupon containing eighteen correct results. Should this prize not be carried off, **£200** will be paid to the competitor sending in a coupon containing seventeen correct results. In the event of this prize not being won, the sum of **£100** will be awarded to the competitor sending in a coupon containing sixteen correct results, or the most nearly correct coupon. In the event of ties in any one of the above offers, the amount of the prize will be equally divided amongst the successful competitors. Only one of these prizes, whatever the amount, will be paid.
6. The Editor of PEARSON'S WEEKLY will accept no responsibility in regard to the loss or non-delivery of any attempt submitted, and proof of posting will not be accepted as proof of receipt.
7. The Editor of PEARSON'S WEEKLY does not assume any responsibility for any alterations that may be made in the fixtures given in the entry form.
8. No correspondence will be entered into in connection with the competition, and telegrams will be ignored.
9. The published decision is final, and competitors may enter on this understanding only.
10. No coupon bearing an address in Scotland will be eligible for this competition.

Closing Date, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12th.

PEARSON'S FOOTBALL CONTEST.—No. 15

Matches to be played on Saturday, Dec. 13th.

Cross out which you consider will be the losing club. For a draw don't cross out either.

Chelsea (2)	v. Sunderland (0)
Aston Villa (1)	v. Tottenham Hotspur (0)
Liverpool (4)	v. Middlesbrough (2)
Bolton Wanderers (0)	v. Everton (0)
Manchester United (2)	v. Bradford City (0)
Burnley (—)	v. Manchester City (—)
Newcastle United (1)	v. Sheffield United (2)
Oldham Athletic (0)	v. Blackburn Rovers (0)
Preston North End (—)	v. Derby County (—)
Sheffield Wed. (3)	v. West Bromwich A. (2)
Bristol City (0)	v. Birmingham (3)
Leeds City (1)	v. Grimsby Town (2)
Wolverhampton W. (3)	v. Barnsley (0)
Clapton Orient (—)	v. Woolwich Arsenal (—)
Hull City (0)	v. Fulham (1)
Leicester Fosse (3)	v. Bury (0)
Brighton and Hove (0))	v. West Ham United (0)
Exeter City (1)	v. Swindon (3)
Northampton (1)	v. Southampton (2)
Millwall Athletic (4)	v. Bristol Rovers (0)

Matches take place on the ground of the first-named club.

I agree to abide by the decision published in "Pearson's Weekly," and to accept it as final, and I enter only on this understanding, and I agree to abide by the conditions printed in "Pearson's Weekly."

Signature.....

Address.....

.....

The figures which follow the names of the clubs denote the number of goals scored in the corresponding match last season. Where no figures are given the clubs did not meet.

£300 is the FIRST PRIZE for MIDDLES

After you've filled up your Football Coupon above turn to page 644 and win a "Middles" prize.

FOOTER FACTS AND FANCIES.

Continental "Internationals" for English Clubs, and Hints on Coupon No. 15.

Some of our English League Clubs, not content with drawing supplies from Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, are now busy scouring the Continent for Players.

Chelsea's Danish International.

The Southern clubs seem particularly partial to these "importations," but if the players are as good as Britishers, and can show us anything which we don't know about the game—well, we won't grumble.

There is very little doubt that Middelboe, who made his *debut* for Chelsea in the game at Stamford Bridge against Derby County, not only played delightful football, but had a good deal to do with Chelsea's victory.

Time after time he came to the rescue of his side, and his passing to the forwards was simply perfect. Whether it was a long drive, or a short, rapid thrust, it went to the desired spot with marked precision, not now and again, but almost every time. The Dane is the best amateur half-back that we have seen for quite a long time.

Nils Middelboe is well known in Continental football, for he has represented Denmark in many an engagement, and already possesses over a dozen International caps. He played a great game recently for Denmark against Germany, and helped his country to another victory against their Teutonic rivals.

Reading's Italian International.

Last spring, when the Biscuitmen were away on a Continental tour, they played a game at Genoa, in which one member of the opposing team far outshone all their other opponents. Attilo Frezia was his name, and he played such a dashing and intelligent game against Reading that their directors were considerably impressed by his performance. Frezia is an International player, and has a thoroughly good reputation in his own country. The Reading directors have now definitely decided to engage him as a professional player, and he may soon be seen in the ranks of the Reading club. If Frezia turns out to be as good a capture to Reading as Middelboe has already done for Chelsea, the Reading directors will have no cause to grumble over the bargain.

Clapton Orient's Belgian International.

Not to be outdone by Chelsea and Reading, Clapton Orient have also been on the look-out for foreign Internationals. On Saturday, November 15th, they introduced W. Vanden Eynden, a Belgian International centre-half, in their game against Queen's Park Rangers Reserves. He played a remarkably fine game, and gave great satisfaction. His football is of the thinking kind; in fact, he plays as much with his brains as with his feet, and there is little doubt that, if he signs professional forms for the O's, he may turn out to be a real find.

Besides being a footballer of real merit, Eynden is also an athlete of no mean ability, for he possesses about forty prizes won in various athletic competitions. His International Caps now number seventeen, and this number will certainly be augmented, for he is one of the best exponents of half-back play that has ever represented Belgium.

Read This Before Filling in Your Coupon.

Middlesbrough have only scored four goals in five years against **Liverpool** at Anfield.

Bradford City have only found the net on one occasion when they have been visitors to **Manchester United** during the last five years, and then only scored one goal.

Newcastle United have not been able to claim one victory out of the last five engagements with **Sheffield United** at St. James' Park.

Blackburn Rovers have always found it a difficult matter to score goals when visiting **Oldham Athletic**; in fact, they have only scored one goal during the last three years, but that goal was enough to give them two points.

Sheffield Wednesday won the last two matches against **West Bromwich Albion** when the latter have visited the Wednesday at Sheffield.

Clapton Orient will be on their mettle when they entertain their near and "dear" neighbours, **Woolwich Arsenal.** There will very likely be a good deal of feeling put into the play, as the Gunners have not forgotten the fact that the Orientals strongly objected to the Arsenal making Highbury their headquarters. The referee will require to take a firm hold of the game, or the teams may get out of hand.

Barnsley don't relish their visit to Molineux Park to meet **Wolverhampton Wanderers.** In the last five engagements between these teams, Barnsley were unable to score, but the home team put on twelve goals.

Brighton have not suffered defeat at the feet of **West Ham United** for at least five seasons, when the latter have visited the seaside town. In the last four engagements at Brighton West Ham have not scored at all.

Northampton lost the game last season when they entertained **Southampton**, but during the four previous years they were always able to avoid defeat.

Millwall Athletic won the last three engagements when **Bristol Rovers** were their visitors.

RESULT of FOOTBALL CONTEST No. 11

Matches played on Saturday, Nov. 15th.

In this contest the consolation prize of £100 has been divided among the following competitors, each of whom sent in a coupon containing one mistake:

James Brookes, 55 Council Terrace, Essex Street, Darwen.
G. F. Cobley, 40 Monthermer Road, Cardiff.
J. H. Kee, 236 Boulevard, Hull.
C. Luther, 7 Albert Place, Brearley St., Handsworth, Birm.
Charles Manders, P.O., Mary St., Birmingham.
James Nutter, 25 Lord Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.
D. Phillips, 121 Charles Street, Milford Haven.
C. P. Raynor, 30 Nova Road, West Croydon.
R. Wharton, 16 Barent Road, Camberwell, S.E.

Samples for Royalty

Every Year the King and Queen Receive Samples Worth Many Thousands of Pounds.

NONE of their Majesties' subjects receive anything like the quantity of sample goods which are sent to the King and Queen. They keep coming to Buckingham Palace throughout the whole year, but they arrive in enormous quantities some weeks before Christmas.

A special room at Buckingham Palace is set aside for the reception of these sample goods, and at Christmas-tide so numerous are the samples that arrive that usually two men from the private Court Post Office have to be employed to deal with them.

The rule concerning unsolicited sample goods sent to their Majesties is very simple. All such goods of considerable value are to be returned to the senders; ordinary samples of little value can be retained and divided among any of the Royal servants who wish to keep them.

Many of the sample goods sent to the King are of considerable value, and they come from tradesmen all over the world, who hope by this means to secure the patronage of the British monarch. For example, a Paris cigar merchant sent the King shortly after his accession a sample of fifty cigars in a magnificent gold box, worth at least fifty pounds. Both the box and cigars were, of course, returned to the sender.

Enough Smokes for Years.

Last Christmas, among the samples received by the King were enough cigars, cigarettes, tobacco, and pipes to keep the most inveterate smoker well supplied for many years. Five thousand sample boxes of all sorts of cigars arrived in one week from hundreds of different cigar manufacturers, and most of the samples were in silver boxes. They were all returned to the senders.

At Christmas-time, when sample goods begin to arrive in very large quantities, a clerk enters in a book particulars of all the valuable articles received, and opposite each item a note is subsequently made giving the date upon which the sample has been sent back; it is but very occasionally that the King or Queen care to retain some of these valuable samples, but if either of their Majesties do so the goods so retained are paid for.

The total value of the various sample goods sent to their Majesties in the year is certainly not less than £30,000, but the bulk of the goods arrive, of course, some weeks before Christmas.

Queen Mary receives most marvellous assortments of exquisite dress fabrics, examples of beautiful laces, embroidery work, and shawls, whilst specially prepared catalogues, never seen by the ordinary public, of various goods arrive in a perfect avalanche at Buckingham Palace at this time of year.

Many of these catalogues cost a very considerable sum of money to produce. A well-known firm that specialises in children's toys has a special catalogue prepared every year for their Royal customers which costs them about £500 to turn out.

It is printed on the best class of cream glazed art paper, and is most elaborately and profusely illustrated from drawings and photographs. It is bound in vellum, and bears the Royal crown on the cover stamped in gold. A copy of the catalogue is sent to every crowned head in Europe.

A Motor-Car of Silver Gilt for Alfonso.

A great Paris firm which specialises in children's dresses prepares every year a still more expensive catalogue for their Royal patrons. It is illustrated by two distinguished artists, who are each paid five hundred guineas for their contributions to the catalogue, which, moreover, contains a number of interesting children's stories.

When foreign Royalties come to this country they become recipients of the most valuable sample goods. The King of Spain, when he first came here some years ago, was sent, among other things, a model of a motor-car made of silver gilt. This beautifully-designed car was two feet in length and modelled in proportion. The value of the metal alone in it must have been over a hundred pounds.

The young King was very much taken with the model and in due course purchased it. The maker would not at first put a price on it, but when the Spanish monarch intimated to him that unless he did so he would send the model back, the maker admitted that the model cost him three hundred pounds to produce, and duly received a cheque for that sum.

A very wealthy and celebrated firm of furnishers sent models of six furnished rooms to the Kaiser when he was staying at Buckingham Palace as the guest of the late King some years ago. The dimensions of each model room was twelve inches by eight, and the furniture was modelled in proportion. All the chairs, tables, bureaus, and other pieces of furniture were of antique design, and were carved in mahogany and satinwood. Many of the chairs in one of the model reception-rooms were of Louis XV. and XVI. periods, and were exquisitely reproduced in gilt.

The whole model took nearly three years to prepare. The Kaiser purchased it for seven hundred guineas.

Samples Are Only Kept a Few Days.

Of course a firm having the regular patronage of Royalty is frequently specially asked to send samples of goods to Buckingham Palace; these are never retained more than a day or so, and are returned usually with an order from the King and Queen for some articles of which samples were sent.

Occasionally a tradesman is requested to attend at Buckingham Palace at a specified hour, and bring samples of certain goods with him, which are then personally inspected by the King or Queen, and the tradesman departs probably with a big order in his pocket.

THAT'S IT!

A LADY who was unacquainted with military terms asserted in a company of gentlemen that her husband was an officer in the Army.

"What is his station, madam?"

"I don't recollect, but the word ends with *ral*," said she.

"You must mean a gene-*ral*, madam."

"No, that's not the word."

"Perhaps a corpo-*ral*?" said another.

"No, sir."

"Well, madam, perhaps it is a scound-*ral*?"

"Yes, yes, that is it!" cried she eagerly.

WHAT ARE THE GIFTS ON THIS CHRISTMAS TREE?

£5 FOR A CORRECT LIST. TEN PRIZES OF 10s. EACH. TWENTY CONSOLATION GIFTS.

Are you good at deciphering picture puzzles? If so, you will enjoy this novel competition of half-finished drawings. Each little picture represents some everyday object which a few lines would complete. No. 13, for instance, is an unfinished picture of a football.

The Editor of 'Pearson's Weekly' will award a prize of £5 to the reader—or readers—who send a correct list of the twenty-five objects. Ten prizes of 10s. each, and twenty consolation gifts, will be awarded to the senders of the most nearly correct lists in order of merit.

If you find any one picture too hard to puzzle out, here is a method that may help you in arriving at a solution: Trace the picture we give off on a piece of paper and add a few lines here and there. You will very likely hit on the correct solution.

THERE IS NO ENTRY FEE

You may send as many attempts as you like.

CONDITIONS FOR COMPETITORS.

1. All attempts must be forwarded on the coupon below.
2. When you have filled in what objects, in your opinion, the half-finished drawings represent, sign your name and address in the space provided, cut out the coupon, and forward it to the Editor, *Pearson's Weekly*, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.
3. Mark your envelope "Christmas Tree" in the top left-hand corner.
4. All attempts must arrive on or before Tuesday, December 13th.
5. The prize of £5 will be awarded, by the Editor of *Pearson's Weekly*, to the sender of the coupon containing a correct list of all the objects on the Christmas tree. In the event of a number of readers sending in all correct coupons, the £5 prize will be divided amongst the successful competitors.
6. Ten prizes of 10s. each, and twenty consolation gifts, will be awarded to the senders of the most nearly correct coupons in order of merit.
7. Should no competitor send in a correct coupon, the £5 prize will be awarded to the sender—or senders—of the coupons containing the greatest number of the objects correct.
8. The published decision is final, and competitors may enter on this understanding only.

PEARSON'S XMAS TREE COMPETITION.

1.	13. .....
2.	14. .....
3.	15. .....
4.	16. .....
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Address .....

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"Forgive Us Our Trespasses"

The Story of a Long-Waited-For Revenge, and the Tragedy It Brought to An Innocent Girl.

By LADBROKE BLACK, *Author of "The House of the Stranger," "The Blackmailer," "Treachery," and others.*

CHAPTER I.

For the Sake of His Sister.

"You are dying. Before death seals your lips for ever tell me the name of the scoundrel who ruined you! Tell me, Maggie!"

A tall, sturdy, middle-aged man, with a face as grey and grim as a granite cliff, stood by the side of a bed looking down at the pale, frail figure of a woman lying there.

Though John Steele knew that his sister was dying, that the great shadow that would part them for ever must soon fall, his soul was relentless and unpitying.

For eighteen years he had tried to drag the secret from her lips, to discover the name of the man who was the father of her daughter, and now he was not going to allow any weak sympathy for his sister in her last moments to deter him from pressing for the truth.

"Let me see my Mary! Oh, John, why are you so cruel? What difference does it make now? Let me see my child!"

The dying woman pleaded with him in a voice so feeble and so pitiable that it must have moved the heart of any man less hard than her brother.

A frown gathered on John Steele's massive forehead.

"I took the child from you eighteen years ago, Maggie. I've looked after her; I've had her educated; I've made her earn an honest living for herself; and I've kept from her the knowledge of her shame. It is useless to waste the moments that remain to you in making such a request. Tell me the name of the man who betrayed you, that I may punish him as he deserves."

"You know I promised him, John," she answered in a feeble whisper. "I cannot break my promise. Oh, don't torture me, John!"

"Such promises, as I've often told you before, are not binding. If you can't see that you owe it to yourself to tell me this scoundrel's name, you must surely understand that it is a debt due to society that he should not be allowed to go free. Even now, after all these years, he should be made to pay the price. Tell me his name, Maggie."

He leant over her, and, putting out his hand, seized her shoulder.

"Tell me, Maggie!"

She shut her eyes, and her lips closed tight, as if to show her determination not to break her promise even now. John Steele, with an angry shake of his shoulders, turned from her and walked across the room to the window.

It was November, and a wild storm was raging in the night. From outside, above the shrieking of the wind, he could hear the roar of the waves tumbling on the bar, where the River Eden flowed into the sea.

He had built his house—solid, four-square, of hard stone—some ten years ago, when Fortune had at last crowned his industry with success. It stood right in the front of the little hamlet of Deeping Ferry, close to the river itself, where he could watch his barges coming and going with the swing of the tides.

Now his eyes looked across the river, where the ferry plied, to the other side.

Out of the darkness there rose up on the summit of a wooded hill a large, brilliantly lit mansion. It was Eden Manor, the country home of the millionaire cotton-spinner, Sir Henry Matlock.

John Steele, as he looked at the great house, with its numerously lighted windows, smiled grimly to himself.

Death, he knew, was busy there, as it was in his own house. Sir Henry Matlock was dying. The greatest doctors in the country were wrestling for his life, but in vain. Everybody in Deeping Ferry knew that he was dying, that his son, Major Matlock, from whom he had been separated so long, had been sent for—that the end was at hand.

The door of the bedroom opened softly, and the village nurse came in. She glanced at her patient, and, thinking her asleep, turned to Steele.

"Sir Henry's dead, Mr. Steele," she said. "The news has just come over. And the Major wasn't there, though they've had the car waiting at the station all day for him."

Steele was about to make some reply when he was arrested by a movement on the bed. Looking round, he saw that Maggie was sitting up, her hair hanging in wild disarray over her shoulders, a strange excitement in her eyes.

"Did you say that Sir Henry was dead, nurse?" she exclaimed in a voice that seemed suddenly to have grown stronger.

The nurse went quickly to the bed, and, speaking soothingly to her patient, tried to make her lie down, but Maggie resisted her efforts.

"I want to speak to my brother alone," she said. "I've something I must say to him, nurse, before the end."

John Steele, striding quickly to her side, motioned to the nurse to leave.

"You are going to tell me the name of that scoundrel, Maggie?" he said when they were alone. "Isn't that it?"

Her strength seemed suddenly to have left her, and she sank back on the pillows.

"You've been hard and unkind to me, John; you've kept my child from me, but I know you are a just man. You will bear witness that I have kept my promise all these years."

Steele nodded his head grimly.

"I am absolved from my promise now. There is no reason why I shouldn't tell you his name."

Her voice trailed off into an almost inaudible whisper. There was a choking sound in her throat, and she pulled feebly at her nightgown, as if she found difficulty in breathing. A great terror seized her brother that he was to be robbed of the secret even now. He bent over her, putting his ear close to her lips.

"Tell me his name, Maggie."

The woman gasped for breath; her lips moved as if vainly trying to frame some words. Then very faintly she uttered a name.

"Major Matlock."

Even as the secret which she had kept for over eighteen years passed her lips Death claimed her for his own. Steele knew it by the grey pallor that had come into her cheeks and the cold, clammy touch of her hand.

He bent down and kissed her on the forehead, and then, leaving the room, he summoned the nurse, and, going downstairs himself, passed out into the night.

The wild storm seemed attuned to his emotions. In his way, he had loved his sister. He had stood by her, keeping the secret of her shame, sheltering her from the scorn and scoffs of their neighbours.

Nobody knew of her child, of the beautiful young girl who had grown up in a distant part of Lancashire, believing that the strange, grim man who came to see her occasionally was her father.

And now at last John Steele had obtained the name of the man who had betrayed his sister—Major Henry Matlock, to whom death but a few minutes before at Eden Manor had given the title of baronet. He knew the scoundrel now, and he would exact vengeance to the uttermost.

In his overwrought mood he made his way to the side of the river, where the water was flowing on an ebb tide swiftly down to the sea. He tried to pray for strength to carry through what he purposed.

Scarcely knowing what he was doing or saying, he repeated the Lord's Prayer, standing there on the shingle, but at the words, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them," he stopped abruptly.

"No, I won't forgive!" he cried wildly, "not till the man who betrayed my Maggie has paid the price."

Somebody seemed to hear him talking to himself, for out of the darkness a man's voice hailed him.

"Hullo! I want a boat across to Eden Manor."

There was something sharp and imperious in the voice, and as John Steele heard it the blood in his veins seemed to tingle, and the muscles of his big body stiffened. The figure of a tall man came stumbling out through the darkness towards him, evidently taking him for one of the boatmen.

"Here! Can you take me across? I want to get to the Manor. I am Major Matlock."

In the darkness John Steele's grim face was invisible. He stood stock still for a moment without speaking.

"Yes," he said at last, "I will take you across."

By the little jetty to which the steam ferry plied in the daytime a boat was moored. Steele loosened the chain, and then motioning to Major Matlock to step aboard, himself took the centre seat. A hard push with the oar, and they were out on the swiftly flowing ebb.

For some minutes John Steele rowed in silence, keeping the head of the boat well up the river to counteract the strength of the tide. But when half-way across he at last addressed his companion.

"The boat's making water. If you'd stand up, Major Matlock, and just look at the back of the seat there, you'd find a bailer. We must get some of the water out of her."

Major Matlock rose as he was requested. Eighteen years of soldiering, travelling, and roughing it in every part of the world had made him accustomed to deal with all sorts of emergencies, and the darkness, the storm, the swiftly running tide, and the fact that he was in a leaking boat, disturbed him not the slightest.

"I'm afraid I can't find it," he said, fumbling about in the stern.

As he uttered the words he was pushed violently from behind, and the next instant he was in the water. With one wild desperate effort he clutched at the side of the boat, and his grip held. Faintly in the darkness he could see the face of John Steele.

"You are the scoundrel who ruined my sister—you, Major Matlock. Maggie Steele lies dead up at my house, and now you shall pay the penalty."

The fingers that gripped the edge of the boat were torn from their hold.

"Don't be a fool, man! She was my wife—my lawful wife, I tell you. Help! Help!" he cried.

The fury of the wind drowned his words. John Steele, kneeling on the bottom of the boat, felt a cold grip of horror at his heart. For some seconds he was like a man paralysed, and then he stumbled back to his seat and began to row furiously down the river, his eyes searching the dark flood. But there was nothing to be seen.

Once he heard a cry, but when he reached the spot there was no trace of the man on whom he had vented his fruitless vengeance.

Behind the red curtains of the Ferryboat Inn, the usual group of fishermen were assembled in the sanded bar.

They looked up curiously as John Steele entered and, tapping on the counter, asked for a glass of brandy-and-water. Not for years—not since prosperity had come to him—had he been known to enter the inn.

"Evening, Mr. Steele," said one of the men. "I hope you've better news of Miss Steele?"

Steele turned on his questioner with a face grim and drawn.

"My sister died an hour and a half ago," he said shortly.

A silence of consternation fell on the group, while Steele drained his glass and called for another.

"Did any of you men hear somebody calling for the ferry?" he said, in a slow deliberate tone.

"No, we haven't heard anybody," they answered in chorus.

"I could have sworn I heard somebody calling for the ferry about an hour ago, but perhaps I was mistaken," retorted Steele.

At that moment the door of the bar swung open and a tall dark-looking man, in a blue overcoat and a bowler hat, and with the general appearance of the cheaper kind of commercial traveller, entered. He was a stranger to everybody in the bar, and a dozen pairs of eyes regarded him curiously. Steele turned to him immediately.

"Have you been outside for long?" he asked.

"Yes, about an hour," replied the man, with his dark eyes fixed on Steele's face.

John Steele took a sip at his glass before he asked his next question, and there was some hesitation in his manner as he asked it.

"Perhaps you can tell me—did you hear somebody calling for the ferry?"

"Yes, I did," replied the man.

As he spoke, he moved up to the bar alongside Steele.

"You look as if you're a bit wet, governor. Haven't you been out boating?" he whispered. "I thought I heard a man's voice calling for help."

Steele put down his glass with an unnecessary clatter on the counter.

"That's curious," he answered.

The man edged up closer to him.

"I was hanging about on the quay, when a man who said he was Major Matlock asked for a boat," he

All boys should read the interesting article on Naval seaplanes in this week's SCOUT.

whispered. "Somebody took him out and didn't come back with him, mister."

Steele's face was hard and grim, and in his grey eyes there was unmistakable terror. He put down his glass and, without a word, went out of the bar.

"Who's the gentleman?" asked the stranger nonchalantly as the door closed.

"Mr. John Steele, barge-owner and builder—a very big man round these parts, mate."

"Seems a bit gruff and short-like, doesn't he?" replied the man.

"His sister's just died; that accounts for it. He was mighty fond of her."

"Ah!" said the stranger, meditatively sipping his glass.

CHAPTER II.

At the Mill-Hands' Concert.

"WE have to come, of course, to these performances, but aren't they a terrible bore, Mr. Gascoyne?"

A stately, beautifully dressed girl turned to the young clergyman who was sitting by her side in the front row of a crowded hall, and spoke with a half-laughing, half-supercilious smile playing about her lips. Her companion, who had been studying the meagre programme with an attention it hardly seemed to merit, looked up.

"My dear Miss Matlock, don't expect me to agree with you. I like to see people enjoying themselves, and there is no mistaking the feelings of this audience."

He glanced over his shoulder at the serried rows of men and women behind, who were following every item of the programme with obvious interest and approval. The Maitland mill-hands were holding their annual social, and, according to custom, the proprietor of the mills was honouring the meeting with his presence.

Sir James Matlock thought it a great honour. Only a month before, by the death of his cousin, Sir Henry Matlock, and the mysterious decease of the latter's son, Major Matlock, he had come unexpectedly into the baronetcy and the property, and, being a plump, pompous man, he was inclined to attach a value and an importance to his new title which perhaps it hardly merited. At the moment he was sitting with folded arms and closed eyes, apparently on the threshold of slumber.

"Father, I believe, is going to sleep," Miss Matlock whispered, and then looking towards an immaculately-dressed gentleman with a thin, narrow face and pointed beard, who was sitting next to Sir James, she added, "and as for Mr. Lyte, he looks as if he were enduring the tortures of purgatory."

The Rev. Frank Gascoyne's handsome, clean-shaven face set sternly. He liked the Maitland people to enjoy themselves; in and out of season he preached the doctrine of healthy amusements and simple recreation, and he resented the patronage, devoid as it was of all sympathy, of these new people at the Hall.

"Mr. Felix Lyte is a famous London critic and impresario—the discoverer of great singers—and if he is bored by our Maitland concerts he'd much better stay away," he answered almost brusquely.

"Well, don't be angry with poor Mr. Lyte, and please don't be so cross with me, Mr. Gascoyne, for not going into ecstasies over a mill-hands' concert," Esther Matlock replied, glancing at him from under her dark eye-lashes.

A slight frown appeared on Gascoyne's brow, but it cleared instantly as he glanced up at the platform, and his whole face lighted up with interest. Esther Matlock, following his gaze, saw a young girl of about eighteen standing behind the footlights. The beauty of her face, set off by a mass of raven black hair, was faultless, and, as she stood there in a simple muslin frock, she looked a perfect picture of youthful loveliness. A slight flush crept into Miss Matlock's cheeks, and her eyes contracted unpleasantly as Gascoyne joined heartily in the applause with which the new performer was greeted.

"And who is this young person in whom you seem to take so much interest, Mr. Gascoyne?" she asked.

"Mary Lawless," replied the clergyman, reddening a little as if ashamed of the discovery of his enthusiasm.

"I am afraid I am none the wiser. Who may Mary Lawless be?"

Gascoyne moved uncomfortably in his seat.

"She is one of my parishioners. Her father was engaged for many years in business abroad, and she was brought up here almost like an orphan. She works in the mill. Three weeks ago her father joined her, and they are living together now in a small cottage on the outskirts of the town."

"Quite a romance!" exclaimed Miss Matlock icily. "But, hush, Mr. Gascoyne; your *protégé* is going to do what they call 'her piece.'"

The piano had struck up the opening bars of "Home, Sweet Home," and Mary Lawless, with her eyes fixed straight in front of her, had begun to sing. At the first notes of the air Felix Lyte had crossed his legs and curled himself up like a man suffering from some internal pain. His head was buried in his chest, and he looked as if he were not only bored, but tortured. The girl, however, had not sung more than a few bars when he sat up abruptly, fumbled for a moment with his eyeglass, and then, fixing it in his eye, stared long and steadily at the singer.

Had it been a London audience they would have watched these proceedings with considerable interest. Felix Lyte was a man with a European reputation, and for him to evince even the slightest interest in a performer was a sure sign that he or she possessed ability beyond the common. But these Lancashire mill-hands were sublimely ignorant of Mr. Lyte's reputation. They did know, however, that they loved to hear Mary Lawless sing, and after the first verse a volume of applause greeted the singer. In the whole hall only Miss Matlock's hands were idle.

"Not at all bad!" she remarked superciliously to Gascoyne. "For a person of her class she really sings quite well."

Gascoyne, who had been clapping vigorously, turned to her, flushed and excited.

"I think her performance deserves more praise than that, Miss Matlock. Why, even Mr. Lyte, whose judgment you value, seems to be delighted."

Esther Matlock looked quickly in the direction of her father's companion. As Gascoyne had said, Felix Lyte was applauding rapturously.

"By Jove, what a find!" he whispered to Sir James. "The girl has a wonderful voice. With a few months' training she would capture all Europe."

Sir James, who had been half asleep, roused himself with an effort.

"Really? You don't say so!"

Lyte held up a warning hand as Mary Lawless began to sing again.

A dark-looking man in a blue overcoat with a velvet collar, who was sitting behind Lyte, bent forward as if to catch what the great connoisseur had said. Then he leant back in his chair and began to listen with a new interest to the singer.

"Who is she?" asked Lyte, when the song was at last over and the applause had died down.

Sir James, leaning across his daughter, consulted Gascoyne, who, with evident pleasure, briefly related what he knew about Mary Lawless.

"Her father is somewhere in the hall," he said. "I saw him as I came in. There," he added, looking round, "at the end of the third row—the big, broad man with the ma[illegible] face."

As Lyte turned his head the dark man behind [illegible] followed the direction of his gaze. The sight of Ma[illegible] father seemed to affect him strangely. His [illegible] dropped, and a look of absolute amazement lighted [illegible] his features. The next instant he rose hastily, a[illegible] quite regardless of the feet and dresses of those oth[illegible] members of the audience before whom he had to pa[illegible], he made his way quickly to where the man who h[illegible] been pointed out was sitting.

"John Steele," he said, tapping him on the shoul[illegible] and speaking in a low whisper, "I want to hav[illegible] word with you."

The man, who up to now had seemed almo[illegible] oblivious of his surroundings and immersed in his own reflections, looked up slowly. As he did so his big, strong face changed, and for a moment he stared at the other as if bereft of speech.

"What do you want with me? I don't know you," he stammered.

"Oh, yes, you do!" replied the other. "My name is Steve Langford. We met for the first and last time on a dark, stormy night at Deeping Ferry."

"I tell you I don't know you. I shall be obliged if you will go away."

"Oh, yes, you do, John Steele!" answered the man who had called himself Steve Langford. "I have been looking for you this last month, and now that I've had the luck to drop on you I'm not going to lose you, old son. You and I have got to have a settlement."

Though the conversation had been carried on in whispers it was loud enough to disturb the audience, who were waiting for Mary Lawless to sing her second song. There were cries of "Sit down, there!"—and Felix Lyte, incensed at the interruption, turned round and petulantly told the man to "be quiet."

"Be quiet yourself!" retorted the man surlily. "I suppose I can speak to my friend here if I want to?"

The audience began to grow impatient, and there were ominous cries of "Throw him out."

Frank Gascoyne rose from his seat, and at the sight of his tall, athletic figure silence fell on the hall.

"You'd better go outside," he said, "if you're going to make a disturbance."

Langford regarded him darkly, but his gaze fell before the other's calm, imperious look. Frank Gascoyne had been in the Army before he had taken orders, and his dual experience had taught him how to deal with men. Moreover, there was no mistaking that strength of muscle and sinew which had earned him the reputation of an athlete in one of the most sport-loving districts in Great Britain.

Langford bent down and grasped the man, to whom he was speaking, by the lapels of his coat.

"Come along," he whispered, "or it'll be the worse for you. I'm not going to be played with like this, John Steele."

With a sudden access of rage, Steele tried to release Langford's hold.

"Let me go. I don't know what you mean by this. I don't know you, I tell you!"

His voice rose in a paroxysm of terror, but before Langford could reply Gascoyne strode quickly to his side.

"I must ask you to leave the hall," he said quietly.

"Go to the devil!" replied Langford.

The next moment Gascoyne's grip had fastened on the collar of his coat. He was lifted bodily from the floor, and then carried, blaspheming and struggling helplessly, to the exit.

"Don't let that man in again," Gascoyne said to the attendant at the door. "And if he makes any more disturbance send for the police."

Esther Matlock had watched the ease with which he dealt with this disturber with an interest which she made no effort to conceal, and as he returned to his seat by her side her face was lit up with enthusiasm.

"What a wonderful man you are, Mr. Gascoyne!" she said. "It must be lovely to be as strong as that."

She could say no more, for Mary Lawless had begun to sing again, and she noticed, with jealous resentment, that Gascoyne's attention was instantly riveted upon the singer. Her second song was received with the same rapturous applause as before, and Felix Lyte seemed to be almost beside himself with pleasure. By comparison, the remainder of the programme was dull. When at last it was all over and Sir James Matlock had made a pompous, halting speech, Esther turned to Gascoyne.

"You are coming home to have some supper with us, aren't you, Mr. Gascoyne?" she said. "You know you promised."

"I'm afraid I must ask you to release me!" stammered Gascoyne, somewhat awkwardly. "The fact is I find I have a very special engagement. I must wish you good-night, Miss Matlock."

He shook hands abruptly with the party from the Hall, and then dived into the crowd that was streaming out of the building. Esther watched his figure, and suddenly her face grew hard and angry as she saw him force his way to the side of Mary Lawless, and begin to speak to her with an enthusiasm which there was no disguising. A storm of passionate jealousy welled up in her heart. She loved this man—she had laid herself out to capture him—and yet here he was

"I'm afraid I can't find it," said Major Matlock, fumbling about in the tern. As he uttered the words he was pushed violently from behind, and he next instant he was in the water.

"The Sorcerer's Stone," by Beatrice Grimshaw, is a fine uncanny story. See the Christmas PEARSON'S MAGAZINE.

preferring the society of a common mill-girl to her own.

While these thoughts were surging in Esther Matlock's breast, Gascoyne was deep in conversation with Mary Lawless.

"Your father's evidently gone, Miss Lawless," he said. "You must let me see you safely home."

As they passed out into the street together a man, who was standing at the entrance scanning the faces of the audience, came up quickly to Mary.

"Miss Mary Steele, isn't it?" he said.

Gascoyne, looking down quickly, saw Steve Langford. Mary was staring at him in hopeless perplexity.

"You are mistaken, sir," she said in her sweet voice. "My name is Mary Lawless."

"Lawless or Steele, it doesn't matter much. Where do you live?"

Before Gascoyne could resent the impertinence of the question on behalf of the girl, Mary had replied.

"Mistletoe Cottage."

"You don't know me," retorted the man with a smile of satisfaction, "but my name's Steve Langford. Perhaps we shall be better acquainted a bit later."

"I don't know by what right you are speaking to Miss Lawless in this way," broke in Gascoyne.

"Oh, don't you, Mr. Sky-pilot," sneered Langford, "but you see it doesn't happen to be any business of yours, and I'll thank you to mind your own affairs. I've had enough of you for one night."

He turned once more to Mary.

"I've missed your father," he said, "but you can tell him I'll call upon him in an hour's time. You'll remember the name, won't you—Steve Langford? And you can tell your father he'd better be at home or it'll be the worse for him."

There was no mistaking the man's threatening manner, and Mary felt a cold inexplicable terror clutch at her heart. What could he mean, and what could he want with her father? She walked on quickly, filled with a wild desire to get away from the neighbourhood of this evil-looking man who claimed acquaintance with her father.

Gascoyne lingered behind for a moment. He had seen the fear that had crept into Mary's face, and his anger burnt hot within him. Who was this man? What right had he to speak to Mary like this?

"Look here, Mr. Steve Langford," he said, towering threateningly above the man, "I want some explanation of your conduct. Miss Lawless doesn't know you, and her father doesn't know you, and what right have you to speak like this to Miss Lawless?"

"Quite a lot, as you'll find," sneered Langford. "You seem rather sweet on the girl yourself, Mr. Parson. Perhaps one of these days you'll discover somebody cutting you out."

The words and the insolent laugh that accompanied them roused Gascoyne's anger. He stretched out his arm quickly and gripped Langford's shoulder.

"You scoundrel," he said. "What have you got to do with Mary Lawless?"

Langford turned swiftly, wresting his shoulder free. For a second he glared at Gascoyne, and then with a mocking laugh he suddenly took to his heels and disappeared out of sight down a side street.

CHAPTER III.

The Blackmailer's Terms.

GASCOYNE, taken by surprise, allowed some seconds to be wasted before he attempted to follow Langford, and by then the man had been swallowed up in the by streets. After ten minutes he abandoned the futile search.

But if he could not get Langford to tell him, perhaps Mary might explain. To think of going to bed without some light being cast on the mysterious relations between this brute and the girl he loved, was an impossible idea. What had he said that could have frightened Mary? He felt that he must have an answer to his question, and without further hesitation he turned his steps in the direction of Mary's home.

As he neared his destination he saw, to his surprise, the lights of a motor-car illumining the garden in front of the little cottage. That John Lawless should have visitors at night, and visitors who came in a motor-car, with liveried servants on the box, struck him as curious. The mystery, however, was cleared up, when on entering the cottage he found Sir James Matlock, his daughter, and Mr. Felix Lyte assembled in the small sitting-room.

"You're just in time, Mr. Gascoyne, to join your persuasions to ours!" exclaimed Sir James.

Gascoyne looked round him in perplexity. John Lawless was seated in a big arm-chair by the side of the fire. Sir James and his daughter had settled themselves on the sofa; Mary was standing in the bow window, leaning against the wall, and the centre of the room was occupied by Felix Lyte.

Lyte was evidently in the wildest state of excitement. He was dancing up and down like a marionette, for ever putting his eye-glass in his eye, and, forgetting that it was there, letting it drop out again, and he clutched desperately at his small pointed beard as if he desired to tear it from his chin.

"I tell you you must consent, Mr. Lawless," he exclaimed in high-pitched tones. "Your daughter has the voice of a Patti. Give her to me; let me train her, and in a year's time I will show you all Europe at her feet."

Gascoyne tried to back across the room towards Mary, but Esther Matlock intercepted him, and with an imperious movement of her hand, made him take the seat by her side.

"Isn't Mr. Lyte ridiculous?" she whispered. "As if this little chit of a girl was worth all the fuss that Mr. Lyte is making. Why she ought only to be too pleased to give him her services for nothing, instead of her father bargaining about it."

Gascoyne was burning to speak to Mary, and though he managed to assume an air of polite interest in what Miss Matlock was saying, he hardly heeded her words.

"I will give her a contract of five hundred a year for five years, Mr. Lawless," Lyte was saying. "I will pay all her tuition fees, and all she has to do is to sing what I tell her. Now, surely, Mr. Lawless, you will consent to my proposal?"

Lawless gazed closely at Lyte's enthusiastic face.

"If she's got the voice you say she has," he said, "she'll be worth much more to you than that, Mr. Lyte. I don't think much of five hundred a year."

"Well, seven-fifty," said Lyte desperately.

"I might consider a thousand," retorted Lawless. "That would have to be the minimum guaranteed."

"You shall make your own terms, Mr. Lawless," replied Lyte. "Make your proposal, and I'll draw up an agreement and we'll sign it here and now. I want to have the thing settled to-night."

As he spoke there was a thundering knock at the door. Lawless started, and, Mary moving from her place in the window, left the room. They could hear the front door open and a man's voice, and presently Mary returned, and with a grave face, going across to John Lawless, whispered something in his ear. Lawless rose hastily to his feet, and it seemed to those that watched him that he swayed as he stood in front of the fire.

"You must all go," he said in a thick voice. "I'm sorry, but I can't talk any more to-night. I've more important business to attend to."

"But, Mr. Lawless," protested Lyte desperately, fearing lest his find should slip from his fingers, that he should lose this girl with the wonderful voice. "We can settle this business about your daughter at once."

"Not to-night," muttered Lawless, and then his eyes sought the doorway and a grey shadow seemed to spread over his face. Following the direction of his gaze, everybody present saw a man in a blue overcoat with a velvet collar standing there on the threshold, his dark, evil-looking face distorted with a grin.

Sir James Matlock rose, angry and humiliated. Lawless was one of his tenants; he had bragged to Lyte that he could fix up this matter quite easily, and then to be turned out, as if he were a person of no account, outraged him.

"This is very extraordinary behaviour, Lawless," he said. "I'm not accustomed to be treated like this. I've come here at considerable inconvenience—considerable inconvenience——"

Lawless cut him short.

"Well, you'll have to go now, Sir James," he said. "I must wish you all good night."

He walked across the room and stood holding the door open while his last visitor moved from the threshold to make way for the others. There was no mistaking his determination not to discuss the business any further that night, and there was nothing left but for Sir James and his party to retire. Once they were out of the house, Lawless turned to Mary.

"You will leave us, please, Mary; I have something to talk over with this gentleman."

Obediently she went out of the room, and as she closed the door behind her, Lawless turned and faced Steve Langford.

"Now," he said, "what is it you want with me?"

For answer Langford took off his hat and coat and placed them on the sofa, and then with a laugh settled himself in an arm-chair.

"Can't you guess what I want to see you for, Mr. Lawless—or rather, Mr. John Steele?" he said. "I wrote to you the day after our little meeting in the Ferryboat Inn, giving you a week in which to reply. At the end of that week I called at your house and found that it had been sold, together with your business and that you had flown. I've dropped on you by chance again to-night; I'm not going to lose you this time so easily, old son."

The next moment Gascoyne's grip had fastened on the collar of his coat. He was lifted bodily from the floor, and then carried, blaspheming and struggling helplessly, to the exit.

"What is it you want with me?" queried Steele.

"You got my letter; you know I asked you for five thousand pounds."

"Why should I give you five thousand pounds?"

Langford slapped his knee and laughed as if he had heard some good joke, while John Steele watched him, grimly stern.

"That's good. You're an innocent lamb, aren't you? I'll tell you why I asked you for five thousand pounds, because I happen to know a little secret about you which you wouldn't like anybody else to know."

"This is blackmail," muttered Steele, "nothing but blackmail."

"Oh, I'm not one of your squeamish ones who minds calling a spade a spade. It's blackmail right enough, and I guess you've got to pay me what I want."

"You know that blackmail is a criminal offence, I suppose?"

"Yes, rather. I believe you can get anything up to five years' hard for it, but somewhere or other I seem to have read that there's another crime for which a man stands on a little trap door with a rope round his neck, and then somebody pulls the bolt and the trap door opens, and he goes the length of the rope into a pit and doesn't come up any more. Ever heard of that, Mr. John Steele?"

Steele moistened his lips, and his grey eyes glared at Langford with a mixture of hatred and terror.

"You've no proofs," he exclaimed at last. "It's an idle tale that you've invented. Nobody will believe you."

"Idle tale be blowed! Didn't I hear the splash as you threw him into the water? Didn't I hear him calling out for help? Don't talk to me about idle tales, Mr. Steele."

John Steele moistened his lips, and his hands tightened nervously on the elbows of the chair so that the knuckles showed white through the skin.

"There was the verdict of the jury," he stammered. "It was all in order. They went into every question, and they decided that he must have slipped into the river."

"They brought in an open verdict," answered Langford contemptuously. "You can't get round it like that, old cock."

"Still they gave their verdict," muttered Steele, seeming to cling desperately to this statement. "They can't go back on that."

"Oh, can't they? And you think you can shelter yourself behind that, do you, Mr. Steele?"

John Steele writhed miserably in his chair,

(Continued at foot of page 622.)

The Christmas NOVEL you will find Leaves other mags. all far behind.

What I Like Best at Christmas

Some Pen and Ink Sketches by "P. W." Readers. The prize of £1 1s. for the best drawing has been awarded to E. W. Wallis, 49 St. O'ave's Road, York, who sent the large drawing on the right. Prizes of five shillings have been awarded to the senders of the other sketches reproduced.

J. A. C., who believes in the motto, "Two's Company," likes ghost stories by the firelight better than anything else.

"The Mistletoe Bow" appeals to C. Noel, the sender of this sketch, at Christmas.

One of our Staffordshire readers enjoys a really jolly Christmas party.

"I like my Christmas dream best," says E. W. W. "When awake, my Little Mary has limitations."

FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES *(Continued from page 621).*

and beads of perspiration stood out upon his forehead.

"Found drowned, that was the verdict," he stammered.

"There's no use you clinging to that, old son. The verdict of a coroner's jury isn't worth a bundle of pins. You've only got to show that fresh evidence has been discovered to have the whole business opened up again. They didn't know I'd seen Major Matlock get into a boat with you to go to the other side; they didn't know he'd never reached his destination. There's a lot of people who'd still be interested to hear about that."

So far he had spoken half-jestingly, but now his manner changed, a frown gathered on his forehead and his dark face grew threatening.

"I've had enough of this back-talk," he said. "You know that I've only got to go to the nearest police-station to get you arrested and hanged for the murder of Major Matlock. All your kicking won't make any difference to that fact. I know, and your life is in my hands. If I give it to you, you've got to pay for it—that's the size of it, Mr. Steele."

John Steele moved clumsily towards a chair and sank down into it.

"If I give you this money, how do I know that you won't come down on me for more? What guarantee shall I have that when I have paid you the five thousand pounds you will not be wanting another five thousand?"

"Who's talking of five thousand pounds?" retorted Langford.

"That was the sum you mentioned in your letter," answered Steele thickly.

"Yes, that's what I wanted then, but the price is a different one now. If you don't buy when the market's low you have to pay more when the price has gone up. My figure's very different now, Mr. Steele."

"Tell me what it is, man," retorted Steele, with a note of despair in his voice. "I know I'm at your mercy. Take what you want and go and leave me in peace. It would be better to be a beggar than to have your threats hanging over my head."

Langford leant forward with a confidential air.

"Now, you're talking like a sensible man. I'm just going to tell you something. I went to a concert to-night and I sat behind a gentleman whose opinion of music and singing is second to none in the world. Fortunately I happened to know him. There was a girl came on to sing. This gentleman said she'd the finest voice he had ever heard. Now do you begin to catch my meaning?"

"No, I don't understand," muttered Steele. "You refer to my daughter. A Mr. Lyte has been here saying that she has a great future for her voice; but what has this got to do with you?"

"Just this, Mr. Steele. You want to purchase my silence, and you want to know about the price?"

"Yes."

"Well, the price is your daughter," answered Langford. "Give her to me as my wife, and my lips are closed for ever. If you won't——"

He drew his finger round his throat and jerked his head back in imitation of the act of hanging, grinning the while at John Steele, who sat back in his chair, his face grey and drawn and a look of stupefied horror in his eyes.

(Another splendid instalment next week.)

THOUGHT SHE WAS BEING HAD.

THE charitable squire, who had been in the habit of giving an old woman a turkey from his own farm each Christmas, sent her instead a written order, entitling her to receive a free turkey at the local poulterer's.

She could not read, however, and her discontent was manifest to the messenger, who tried to explain things to her.

"It's just the same in the long run," he said. "If you take that order to the poulterer's, you'll get your Christmas box as usual. It's a paper turkey this time, don't you see?"

"A paper turkey, is it?" the disappointed and indignant old lady repeated. "That's summat new. Last year it wor a leather turkey, too tough to eat; this year it's a paper one; and next year, if I lives to see it, it'll most likely be a cast-iron turkey. Tak' it back to the squire, wi' my compliments, and ax him if he thinks I'm an ostrich, or what?"

The Word "COMPLETE" Describes Exactly The

Daily Express

FOOTBALL NEWS.

NOTHING WORTH PRINTING IS MISSED.

"ORION'S" Trenchant Football Articles Are the Talk of the Football World.

A SERMONETTE FOR CHRISTMAS.

By Our Clerical Contributor.

C Cheerfulness is a personal possession, but you can
H Hand some of it on to those whose weary, drab lives
R Represent naught but a grim struggle to exist, whose
I Inheritance is labour and sorrow—strangers to joy.
S So, in kindly spirit, go forth, seek, and find some of
T These joyless ones. Bring some cheer into their lives.
M Make it a Christmas resolve that you will, out of your
A Abundance or sufficiency, make, with kindly heart, the
S Sun to shine at Christmas in one poor home, at least.

D Do this, and the deed shall bring you sweet sweet joy
A And satisfaction, that the remembrance of it will make
Y Your own Christmas a "happy" one in deed and in truth.

A PARTY of local musicians were out "busking" on Christmas Eve, and their music was not such as would "soothe the savage breast."

They were about to commence playing in one of the streets when an elderly dame came out, and, handing them twopence, jocularly remarked:

"You need not bother to play. I heard you in the next street."

WHY SHE WAS SORROWING.

"You say that your wife threw a plate at you?"

"Yes; it was an expensive china plate. It broke against my head."

"And wasn't your wife sorry after she had thrown it?"

"Yes, she seemed very sorry."

"How did she express her sorrow?"

"She said she was a fool not to control her temper better."

"Anything else?"

"Yes, she said she didn't believe she could match that plate if she hunted the whole world over."

Mrs. Windsor's cookery articles tell Every week in HOME NOTES how to cook well.

CHRISTMAS-TREE TRAGEDIES.

The Pretty Little Coloured Candles are usually the Cause of the Accidents.

IT seems all wrong to talk of tragedies in connection with Christmas, especially in connection with Christmas-trees. A Christmas-tree ought to be, and generally is, the jolliest event of the whole year. It is too cruel that all the fun and amusement should end in horrors, but this unfortunately does sometimes happen.

Nearly all these Christmas accidents are due to carelessness. Perhaps an account of some of them will lead to a little more caution, and the avoidance of such sad happenings during this year's festivities.

The practice of lighting up a Christmas-tree with unprotected candles is one of the most dangerous imaginable. It was this that led to the burning of the Greek royal palace at Tatoi, three years ago.

The late King had ordered a big Christmas-tree for the benefit of his grandchildren, and before the young people were admitted to the hall where the tree had been erected servants were employed to light it up.

The next thing was a wild shout of "Fire!" The great tree blazed like a torch. Before anything could be done the whole apartment was ablaze, and in a very short time the right wing of the palace was one enormous bonfire.

In this case there were no lives lost. Last Christmas, however, saw a Christmas-tree fire which had a much more terrible ending. A member of the well-known firm of architects, Messrs. Carrere and Hastings, had, with his wife, prepared a Christmas-tree for their children, and left it, with the candles lighted, while they went to receive some guests.

All of a sudden there came a roar of flames. The house was old and dry as tinder, and within an incredibly short time the whole place was ablaze.

Firemen came in a hurry, but before they could extinguish the flames the lower part of the house was burnt out.

Forcing their way upstairs, they found the dead bodies of the father and mother in the nursery. They could easily have escaped by the front door, but they had evidently rushed up in a wild search for their youngest son, not knowing that the nurse had saved the child by getting out through the roof into the house next door.

Those coloured glass balls which are used to decorate Christmas-trees are most dangerous things in the hands of small children. At Christmas, 1910, a little Nottingham girl, not quite a year old, got hold of one and put it into her mouth. It broke, and the finely splintered glass injured the poor baby's throat so badly that there was no saving her.

I DECORATE FOR MILLIONAIRES.

A Well-known London Florist Talks about some Big Orders for Holly and Mistletoe.

EVERY year I carry out the Christmas decorations for London's millionaires—said the Covent Garden florist—and I can honestly say that there was never so much money spent by the very wealthy on floral decorations at Christmas as there is to-day.

One millionaire banker spends at least £2,000 on floral decorations for his country mansion at Christmas. The walls of the dining-room, which is a very large apartment, are covered from floor to ceiling with white chrysanthemums. The pictures on the walls, of course, are left exposed to view. The flowers and the fixing up of them costs about four hundred guineas.

The huge hall is literally embowered in pure white roses, with which red-berried holly is entwined, and the staircases are similarly decorated.

I have another client who spends about three hundred pounds in having his billiard-room elaborately decorated with red-berried holly.

Facing the entrance to the room he has the words "Wishing you all a very merry Christmas" designed entirely in red berries on a background of holly.

Last year I decorated the ballroom at the country house of an American millionaire who was then living in this country. The decoration of this room was one of the most elaborate and expensive pieces of work I ever carried out.

The walls and ceiling of the room were entirely covered with holly leaves in such a way as to create the effect that they were growing on them. The holly was heavily "flecked" with white roses. Hundreds of tiny electric lights were cunningly arranged between the holly leaves, and when these were lighted up at night, the effect produced was extraordinarily weird and beautiful.

The decoration of the ballroom cost the American millionaire in question about £1,500.

People who have their houses very elaborately decorated at Christmas give their orders a long while in advance. This year I had several orders booked in September for the decoration of some large country mansions. Usually on receiving a big order I go down to the house which is to be decorated, and make a plan of the decorations, and then submit an estimate of the cost of carrying it out.

Often, however, a customer will write and say that he is prepared to spend so much money on floral decorations in his house. The sum may be anything from a few hundred to a thousand pounds, and he will leave it to me to do what I can for the money.

One of my customers, the wife of a very wealthy peer, sends me every Christmas a scheme for the decoration of her country house, which I have to be careful to carry out very exactly in accordance with her directions. She has every sitting and reception room in the house, which is an extremely huge one, beautifully decorated, and has a different scheme of decoration for each room. Usually she spends about a thousand pounds on these decorations.

Red-berried holly, of course, is largely used in these decorations, and so is mistletoe, but it is the flowers, all of which are forced and out of season, that run away with the money, and, of course, the labour involved in putting them up costs a good deal. I have had as many as ten men, specially trained in this sort of task, at work for a week in carrying out some very large orders.

Who said Merry Christmas?

About Some Workers who Spend a Very Dull 25th of December.

To many people Christmas Day is anything but a happy one, for not only do they have to work as hard on the twenty-fifth as they do during the rest of the three hundred and sixty four days of the year, but their duties are all the more distasteful because they have all round them merrymaking and jollity in which they themselves cannot join.

"Robert's" Christmas is indeed an unhappy one. All the day he wanders through deserted streets with sounds of merriment drifting through the windows.

The policeman on duty on Christmas Day is one of the most unfortunate of such individuals. All day long he tramps through empty, depressing streets, and through nearly every window sounds of merriment float outwards, and half-drawn curtains reveal festive boards groaning with good fare, surrounded by laughing, happy faces.

Nor has the Christmas Day policeman the consolation of knowing that he will have an easy day. For at Christmas time swarms of beggars and tramps worry the servants round the kitchen doors for scraps of food, and pedestrians are harassed by beggars who take advantage of the general air of charity and good-fellowship which pervades the air at this season of the year.

All these pests have to be rounded up by the Christmas Day policeman, and also he has to keep his eyes open for enterprising burglars. Christmas Day is a favourite one for Bill Sikes, as it presents him with excellent opportunities of cracking a few easy cribs. All things considered, Robert's Christmas is not a happy one.

Trying to keep warm in a draughty porter's room is the porter's Christmas, with all round him tantalising hampers of good things which are waiting to be claimed.

The railway porter's Christmas runs the policeman's close for dreariness. Instead of spending his twenty-fifth in his family circle he wiles away the hours on a draughty railway station trying to keep warm over the little waiting-room fire. There is little for the Xmas porter to do, for no one travels on Christmas Day unless obliged to, and those that do are generally grumpy and ill-tempered, and the unfortunate porter generally gets the brunt of their ill-humour.

The early hours of Christmas are spent by the pantomime producer in endeavouring to drill stage hands, supers, carpenters, and principals into something like order.

As he eats his meagre, half-cold Christmas repast in the bleak porter's-room he must remember with many longings the plump turkeys and weighty hampers that he has handled during the past week, many of which are probably lying round him still waiting their claimants.

The popularity of dining out at Christmas robs many a waiter of his day.

A man for whom Christmas Day is one of long-drawn-out anxiety and worry is the pantomime producer. Christmas Eve is the night on which the full dress rehearsal takes place, and well into the early hours of Christmas morning the harassed producer is drilling his supers into perfection for the opening on Boxing Day.

The growing habit of spending Christmas in hotels or dining out at restaurants, a practice which of recent years has become very popular amongst the upper and middle classes, now robs many a waiter of his Christmas Day.

The newspaper reporter spends his Christmas Day looking for "write-ups" of any description.

Whilst most people are exchanging greetings and presents over the breakfast table the unfortunate Christmas waiter is busy employed polishing spoons and forks in preparation for the festive diners. Both afternoon and evening he is hustling round with stacks of plates and glasses. The diners are impatient and hard to please—for many of them only dine in style on Christmas Day, and expect unlimited attention, in return for which they generally leave behind the tiniest of tips.

Another Christmas worker, who has the dispiriting task of looking on at enjoyment in which he cannot participate, is the newspaper reporter. From early morning to late in the afternoon he is looking for "write-ups." If some big railway smash comes through on the wires, then the newspaper man will have to spend most of his Christmas day hastening to the scene of the event.

Ladies! "Fortunes in Furs" is an article in the Christmas PEARSON'S which will interest you.

COMPLETE SHORT STORY.

The Post-mortem

A Tale of a Christmas Present and an Old Miser Who Met His Match.

By CHARLES TIBBITS.

"OF all the confounded impudence!" Mr Uriah Waglow stopped, overcome with wrath as he surveyed the thing. It was Christmas Eve, the clock had struck seven, and he had been sitting in his dining-room when the thing had been brought him.

Uriah Waglow had the reputation of being immensely rich and "near," and repute had not lied in his case.

He was a bachelor and had no one to please but himself—no one in the house save "that fool of a woman," as Waglow dubbed Mrs. Thomas, his housekeeper. She was carefulness itself, but Waglow saw in her a monster of extravagance who threatened to bring him to want. Wasteful? She was "just like a woman." Stupid idiot! And now she had brought him this!

It was a parcel delivered by the parcel post. Mrs. Thomas had brought it in, and he had cut the string and thrown aside the brown paper that enveloped the box, wondering who could have been mad enough to send him a Christmas present. Perhaps it was game from someone? Had some fool to whom he had lent money been idiot enough to think that he might by sending him a Christmas present propitiate him respecting the next prompt payment of a hundred and sixty per cent. interest? If someone had he would find himself mistaken.

Opening the box, he took the thing out. A doll—a big doll! He stared at it in amazement. Of course, it was a joke—an infernal joke on somebody's part! Throwing the doll into the armchair he glared at it with bulging eyes. Then he groped in the grate and, gripping the poker, with one well-directed blow, smashed in the waxen head with the fluffy curling hair and the idiotically blue eyes.

He felt better after that.

"I only wish I had the scoundrel here who sent you," he exclaimed, waving the poker threateningly at the doll victim. "If I had——"

He hastily concealed the poker behind him as there came a knock at the door. It was "that fool of a woman," Mrs. Thomas.

"Beg parding, sir," she exclaimed. "Did you call? And there's a gentleman, the other Mr. Waglow, of No. 27, at the front door. 'E wishes to know if you received a parcel as belongs to 'is little girl an' 'as been delivered 'ere by mistake? 'E says——"

"Tell him, Mrs. Thomas," snapped Waglow, standing in front of the doll to conceal it, "that there's been nothing of his infernal things sent here by mistake—nothing. And if there had been it would have been all owing to his confounded impudence in coming to live in the same street with a person of the same name, instead of going to the——"

But Mrs. Thomas had shut the door.

He turned to the doll and waved his poker at it as if inclined to renew his attack upon it. Seizing it by the throat he shook it and threw it from him. Then he placed down the poker and thought. Picking up the brown-paper wrapper he had thrown upon the floor, he scanned the direction on it carefully, holding it up to the feeble gaslight. Why had he not done so before? There, as plainly as could be in ink, were the words, "M. Waglow, 27 Barch Street, Burlingdon."

"M. Waglow?" That would be Mary, Martha, Matilda, Maude, Margaret,—anything beginning with an M—Waglow, one of those three girls that belonged to the abominable Waglow who had come to reside in the same street.

He had smashed the doll in his rage. He groped in the armchair for the pieces. No. There was no hope of ever sticking the thing together again. What would be his position in the eyes of the law with respect to it? Could the other Waglow recover damages? He rang the bell and Mrs. Thomas appeared.

"By the way," he said, trying to appear perfectly calm, but with his heart beating wildly as he reflected that he might have to pay for the doll, "did you sign for a parcel that came this evening?"

Mrs. Thomas had. "Just like a fool of a woman." The parcel would be traced to him! He sat down to think. Why had he been so hasty with the poker?

Meanwhile, in the sitting-room at No. 27 the other Mr. Waglow was seated with a companion, a tall young fellow with keen, dark eyes and a pleasant face. Mr. Waglow was a little man with a countenance that might have been humorous had it not had printed on it the shadow of perpetual care as to how he was to meet the next week's expenses.

"Cheer up!" said his companion, after they had smoked for some moments in silence. "Come, be jolly!"

"It's a hard job," sighed Mr. Waglow. "Nothing seems to make thirty-five shillings a week seem so small as Christmas time. One sees turkeys and things in the windows, and—and all manner of things, and——"

He sighed. There was cold or hashed mutton to-morrow! It was hard lines. And the children looking forward to a treat!

"It's true," sighed Dick sympathetically. "It's beastly!"

He was getting twenty-seven shillings a week as clerk in a solicitor's office and was in love with Bella Waglow, the eldest daughter of the Waglow establishment.

"And what I cannot make out," said Waglow thoughtfully, "is how Uncle Jim could have sent that postcard saying he was forwarding Maria a doll and then not send it. I thought perhaps it had gone to old Miser Waglow up the street, but—no!"

"You've been to inquire?" asked Dick.

"Yes, and he hasn't seen or heard anything of it. Poor Maria! She had set her heart so on that doll! Wasn't that a ring at the front door? I wonder who it can be?"

He went to answer the summons himself, Mrs. Waglow being engaged in the kitchen wrestling with the problem of the next day's dinner, and washing up.

"You are, I presume, Mr. Waglow?" asked the little weazened man standing before the door-opener. "I am the other Waglow. I have come to explain something."

He waved a brown-paper parcel he carried in his hand before Mr. Waglow's eyes.

"This infernal thing," he went on, "has been sent to my house, and something has happened to it. It is all owing to your coming to my street. Why the dickens, since you must be called Waglow, didn't you go somewhere else?"

Miser Waglow was quivering with rage and fear combined. Would he have to pay for the doll? Why, it might cost him five shillings! He had resolved, thinking the matter over in his room and recognising the almost certainty that the doll would be traced to his possession, to put a bold face on the matter—take the bull by the horns.

He followed Mr. Waglow into the little sitting-room.

"You see what's happened," he said, tearing the brown paper aside and disclosing the wrecked doll. "This thing was delivered at my house—all owing to your being fool enough to come and take a house in my street—and my idiot of a housekeeper put it on a chair. I sat on it. An accident—pure accident!"

"And that—that," gasped the other Mr. Waglow, "is poor Maria's doll? She hasn't had more than a sixpenny doll since she was born—and now? She was expecting it so! We had a postcard to say it was coming. Foolishly I told the child—and now?"

His eyes grow misty with tears. Miser Waglow grinned. The man was a fool! If there had been any question of his making good the value of the doll it was all settled now. He would easily be able to manage this kind of fellow—a man who was close on shedding tears because his child was done out of a doll!

"You see it was pure accident," he said. "All owing to you—a person with the same name as myself—coming to live in my street. The thing comes to my house, my idiot of a housekeeper opens the box, thinking there might be game or something sensible in it, and puts the doll down in my easy chair. Then I come in, in the dark, and sit on it. Accident—pure accident! I won't complain of the frightful start the thing gave me."

If the explanation were accepted there could be no question of his not being called on to pay for the damage he had done.

"I am sorry—sorry," began Mr. Waglow. "You sat on the doll? I can imagine how sorry you must have been when——"

"Half a minute!" said Dick.

He had been looking at the doll scrutinisingly. Miser Waglow felt a deadly hatred of him growing each moment. Why the dickens was he looking at the thing like that?

"You say you sat on this doll?" demanded Dick.

"Certainly."

"Now, looking at the doll," said Dick, in most solemn tones, "and examining it carefully I discover a clearly defined cut in the occipital region over the capiastrum octanum. See it?"

He pointed to the doll's head. To his delight he noted Miser Waglow's face fall from elation to dejection.

"I see something," said Miser Waglow cautiously. "A hole."

"Good!" exclaimed Dick. "That wound extends from the capiastrum octanum to the balistra."

He waved his finger over the wax cavity.

"I daresay," agreed Miser Waglow.

"It is perfectly well defined," declared Dick. "Perfectly! Nothing could be clearer to the biggest fool that ever served a month in an anatomical school. And the wound has been inflicted by what?"

"I sat on it," said Miser Waglow.

"Round the wound," went on Dick, as if he had not heard him, "we detect a substance of the nature of soot. The blow that dealt destruction was inflicted by a heavy hand or by one made powerful by murderous fury, and the weapon employed was a heavy, blunt weapon. A jemmy or a poker would do. The soot points to a poker. One blow—and then?"

The cold drops of perspiration were standing on Miser Waglow's brow. He hastily wiped them away with his handkerchief.

"Then," went on Dick, "the assailant, not satisfied with his awful work, proceeded to strangulation. Look! Here are the beautifully defined prints of three sooty fingers on the doll's throat."

Miser Waglow could hardly believe his ears. Was this young man Sherlock Holmes in the flesh? He glanced at him, and Dick's eyes met his accusingly.

"Very clever—very clever!" exclaimed Miser Waglow. "He, he, he!" The laugh he forced died away in a hollow rattle in his throat. "You don't believe, then, that I sat upon the doll, young man?"

"Not for an instant," answered Dick. "The evidence of an unprovoked and most ferocious attack is overwhelming. There can be no doubt as to how she"—he waved his hand to the doll—"fell a victim."

Miser Waglow's blood ran cold. It was just like being accused of murder.

"The thing's as clear as day," proceeded Dick. "There has been, of course, no extravanous sanguinary exudation. We could not expect that. Otherwise the assailant's clothes would have been saturated with blood."

His eyes swept over Miser Waglow's shabby suit as if he should have looked for damning evidence there.

"Where the dickens did you learn all this stuff?" gasped Miser Waglow.

"A man doesn't walk the hospital at Guy's for ten years for nothing," answered Dick, and the other Waglow listened, dazed more than ever as he reflected that Dick had never been at Guy's in his life. "Post-mortems, Mr. Waglow," went on Dick. "Post-mortems! One learns a lot when a fellow has been up to his neck in post-mortems for the best part of his life."

Miser Waglow bit his nails. Then he sighed—a sigh that was almost like a groan.

"Since you seem to doubt it was an accident," he said at last slowly, "I suppose I had better pay for the thing. Five shillings——"

"Five shillings!" cried Dick contemptuously. "Look at her! Look at her clothes!" He lifted up the doll's leg and showed a frill round her ankle. "Lace!" he exclaimed in admiring tones. "Finest Brussels. Wonderful how they dress dolls nowadays! Look here!" He touched the ridiculous stuff round the doll's neck. "Tussore!" he exclaimed.

"What the dicken's tussore?" snapped Miser Waglow.

"Goodness knows how much a yard!" replied Dick. "By Jove!" He had found a little ticket on the doll's clothing—a tradesman's ticket with mysterious symbols on it. "By Jove!" he cried. "D M G! D M G! The tradesman's secret price mark. Know what that means?"

The two Waglows shook their heads.

"Five pounds!" cried Dick. "Five pounds!"

"I tell you what it is," exclaimed Miser Waglow. "I'm sorry, extremely sorry I sat upon the doll. After all, neighbours should be neighbours! I'll pay two pounds—three pounds"—as Dick shook his head—"three pounds ten—four pounds—in full satisfaction of all claims. I'll draw out a proper indemnity and pay cash down, and you can sign it. What do you say, Mr. Waglow?"

Mr. Waglow looked at Dick. Dick nodded.

"Done!" said Mr. Waglow.

* * * * * * *

"Four pounds!" exclaimed Mr. Waglow, clinking the golden coins in his hand. "Four pounds! What a godsend at Christmas time! How splendidly you did it, Dick."

"Come on," answered Dick. "We'll go and buy a turkey and things for to-morrow. As for Maria's doll, we can get another as good as that"—he waved his hand quite contemptuously to the damaged doll—"for five shillings. Am I sure of it? Yes. Didn't I once serve six months behind the counter? Those letters D M G and those dots and figures. What do they mean? They mean, 'Take five shillings or as much as you can get.'"

With Christmas tales and fun and fact, The Christmas ROYAL'S tightly packed.

Would You Like to Pull These?

One of the World's Most Famous Christmas Crackers contained a Millionaire's Daughter, Dressed as a Little Fairy, who Skipped Out and Delighted Her Father's Guests by Her Dancing.

ONE of the most remarkable Christmas crackers ever made was that shown in the first picture, the story of its origin being as follows: A certain rich man had an only daughter who fell in love with a young fellow her father did not approve of. For some time the stern parent remained obdurate against the match, but he could not help noticing that his opposition to her heart's desire was having anything but a beneficial effect upon his girl's health.

Two Doves in a Cracker. A stern parent, who had kept two lovers apart, relented and gave them this cracker to pull as a sign of peace.

Christmas came round, and, to the young lady's astonishment, her father announced that the lover might come to their house for the Christmas dinner. Accordingly, his daughter issued the invitation, although somewhat doubtful about the result. All passed off well, however, until the end of the feast, when her father left the room, presently returning with a most peculiar-looking Christmas cracker. It was something like a long box, and it was full of holes.

Beckoning his daughter and the young man from their respective places at table he placed the strange cracker in their hands, and bade them pull it. This they proceeded to do, when it promptly came apart, releasing from a small perforated box inside a couple of doves!

The Monster Ballroom Cracker. It was erected by a young squire giving a ball. A staircase ran from the bottom to the top, and the footman, concealed inside the cracker, tossed bouquets of flowers on to the dancing guests.

The old gentleman then explained, with a smile, that the birds were in token of peace, since he had decided to allow the marriage of his daughter and her lover.

For sheer size, one of the quaintest crackers ever constructed was that erected in the ballroom of a rich squire on the occasion of a Christmas ball which he was giving. The framework of this monster cracker was of wood, and a circular staircase ran up the centre of it from bottom to top.

Outside it was lavishly decorated with silks and lace to represent a giant Christmas cracker, as shown in the second illustration. Before the ball began a footman was concealed inside the cracker, and, at a given signal, this man peeped out from the silken wall of his hiding-place and tossed beautiful bouquets of flowers to the guests as they passed underneath.

From a Miser to a Girl he Loved. The cracker contained a dainty pair of satin shoes. In place of a buckle, a handsome diamond shone on each shoe.

A pleasant surprise awaited the recipient of the cracker shown in the third drawing. The giver, a rich, miserly old gentleman, had fallen in love with a beautiful tobacconist's assistant at the shop where he bought his "smokes."

Being a curiously shy man, through having lived long alone, he did not dare to declare his passion, but as Christmas drew near a brilliant idea occurred to him.

Going to a cracker manufacturer, he ordered a special Christmas cracker to be constructed to his order, and inside was placed a dainty pair of satin shoes, with a handsome diamond in place of a buckle upon each of them. He also took the precaution to place his visiting card in each slipper, and, entering the shop on Boxing Day, he immediately found himself chatting easily enough to the delighted maiden of his heart. The couple were married three weeks later, all through a Christmas cracker!

A magnificent cracker was ordered by a big Stock Exchange magnate last Christmas for the benefit of his guests on the 25th. It is shown in the fourth drawing. This cracker was about four feet long, and running through the centre of it was a silken cord. At the end of dinner, this cracker was laid on the table, and the guests who were opposite one another laid hold on either end of the silk cord. They then had a miniature tug-of-war, when the great cracker parted in the middle, and each of its halves was found to contain costly presents, which the guests divided among themselves.

A Giant Cracker for a Stock Exchange Magnate. He bought it for a party he was giving on the 25th. The guests indulged in a miniature tug-of-war, and when the cracker parted it was seen to contain costly presents.

A pretty Christmas cracker idea was introduced into his Christmas festivities by a well-known millionaire of New York a few seasons ago. Between the courses of the Christmas feast, two men servants entered the room bearing a great silver dish on which reposed a monster cracker. When the dish was laid on the table, the cracker burst open, and the little daughter of the millionaire, dressed up as a fairy, skipped out and performed a dainty dance in the centre of the table.

The New York Millionaire's Cracker. Served on a dish at table, it contained his little daughter dressed as a fairy. She skipped out and danced.

A FATHER recently wrote to Oxford University: "What are your terms for a year? And does it cost anything extra if my son wants to learn to read and write as well as to row a boat?"

GIVE ME GOLOSHES.

A Turkey Tells Its Life Story to Mr. P. Doubleyou.

I WAS born in Buckinghamshire, at Mr. Fowler's famous turkey farm at Great Missenden, and I am now nearly two years old. I shall never forget the day I was born. I felt simply rotten; not really rotten, of course, or I should never have been born at all, but just weak, and as limp as chewed string.

It was no end of a bother getting out of the shell. Several times I asked myself if it were worth it all, and in the end the man who looked after us had to help me out.

Anyway, there I was, into the world at last, and my goodness, how I hated it!

I was so frail that I could scarcely stand on my legs, but I began to pick up a bit after a light meal of hard-boiled eggs chopped up with a little scalded biscuit meal. They seemed to understand what a delicate constitution I had, for I must say they fed me very carefully, but my appetite was very poor for the first week or two.

About this time, several of my little brothers and sisters died. They caught cold, poor things, through running on wet grass; for we turkeys, as a family, are very susceptible to cold in the feet. Wet feet give us cramp, and chill gives us "swell-head," and in the early stages of our career either of these are very dangerous. For that reason I sometimes have wished that turkeys could wear goloshes.

Our Runs Are Moved Every Day.

We suffer, too, from a tendency towards depression. We have to be kept interested, especially in our surroundings, and constant change of scenery is necessary if we are to grow up into strong, handsome birds. Our houses and runs have to be moved a little bit every day, otherwise life would become too monotonous.

In these early days I was delicately pink about the face and wattles, but after a bit I became red—"shooting the red," we call it—which marks the advance to birdhood. Then I may be said to have "come of age," and I took my place on the open-air roost with the other turkeys—thousands of them—at night.

I now had a big field to exercise in, with here and there great heaps of sand and chalk; the first is good for my digestive organs, the second helps to make the shells for my eggs.

My food was, and still is, mostly grains, but I am by no means a bigoted vegetarian, for a delicacy to which I am very partial is shredded horse-flesh. This I find very nourishing. (It occurs to me that I have been having extra rations lately. I wonder why!)

I Thought I'd Hatch My Own Eggs.

Last February I began to lay, and after I had laid about twenty eggs I came to a most important decision; I made up my mind that I would hatch out my own children. There is, of course, a great deal to be said in favour of having hens as step-mothers, for some turkeys are very clumsy mothers, but I had no fear on that point myself. So I left off laying and began to "brood."

This didn't seem at all to please the man who was looking after us and he caught me one day and dropped me over the wire netting that separated us from the other families.

Now, I naturally wanted to get back to my own family, for, so to speak, we had "kept ourselves to ourselves," and I was extremely annoyed at this treatment.

Try as I might, however, I could not find a way back, though I spent the greater part of two days running round and round the wire-netting.

It was tiring work, I can tell you, and when the man finally allowed me to return I found that the violent exercise I had been forced to take had completely spoiled my "broodiness," and I was ready to begin laying again. Between ourselves, I believe that's what the man put me outside the netting for!

I should like to add—though, perhaps, I say it that oughtn't to—that I am an unusually handsome bird, very broad in the chest, as a good turkey should be, and weighing about eighteen pounds. This is very gratifying, of course, but I'm rather uneasy about it, for between you and me and the gate-post there have been a number of mysterious disappearances among the handsomest of my family within the last few weeks!

You'll say "The Quest of the Sacred Slipper," In the Christmas NOVEL is a ripper!

COMPLETE SHORT STORY

A Deal in Turkeys

How a Practical Joke at Messrs. Brown, Brown, & Son's Fell Rather Flat.

By VINCENT EMS.

"VERY nice of them: very nice indeed!" said Mr. James Braith, as he trudged along carrying a fish basket from which a turkey's head hung out "Thought they were up to some of their jokes at first"

His companion, Mr. Frederick G. Topper, smiled.

"Sort of joke one doesn't mind," he replied, giving an appreciative look at *his* basket. "Ten-pounders, I should say. Pretty heavy, any rate!"

Topper was cashier in the firm of Brown, Brown, & Son. Braith was the manager. Both had completed twenty-one years' service in the firm at Christmas, and the staff of seven clerks had, with their compliments and best wishes, presented them with a turkey apiece.

The idea had been Raymond's, the licensed wag of the office. For two or three days there had been much planning and talking, until, all things being ready, the public presentation of the two turkeys had been made on the Tuesday evening before Christmas.

Braith was a solemn, steady-going Scotsman, with hair just beginning to grey a little, but with no dimming of the humorous twinkle in his kindly blue eyes. Clerks had come and gone. Some had bettered themselves; others had muddled matters, but all had respected Braith, even those whom he had been obliged to invest with the Most Noble Order of the Sack.

Topper was a stout little man, scant of breath, and a trifle pompous, but in character much like his friend Braith.

"Raymond put it very neatly," said Braith. "He'd get on if he took things a little more seriously. But he's young, I suppose," and the manager sighed a little for his own tale of years.

Raymond *had* done it very neatly.

"Mr. Braith and Mr. Topper," he had said, "I have been asked by the staff of this firm to beg your acceptance of two turkeys—one each—as a tangible, material, and seasonable expression of our feelings towards you. You have completed, we believe, twenty-one years' service in this firm. You have 'come of age,' and we feel that in whatever way the guv—, I mean Mr. Brown, may recognise that, some expression from those who work under, and, if we may say so, so happily *with* you, is not only meet, but proper. Will you, therefore, each accept a turkey, and—a bag in which to convey it to your homes?"

Braith had been visibly affected. He wiped his glasses, coughed and stuttered, and ultimately managed to say, with one hand on a turkey's breast, "Thank you, gentlemen, thank you very much."

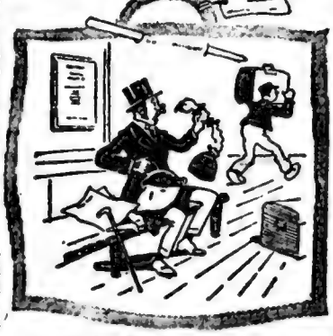
Topper, the dignified, had unbent and shaken hands with the circle of seven, office boy included.

Then Raymond and another clerk had removed the two turkeys, and when the manager and the cashier had washed their hands, and were ready to go, there were their turkeys all nicely packed in fish baskets for them.

"I must go in here," said Braith to Topper. "Got a few things to get for the wife. Don't wait. I may miss the 6.22."

Topper nodded, and went on to the station.

Braith fulfilled his wife's commissions, and then it suddenly came into his mind that he ought to take some sausages back with him. Mrs. Braith had grumbled about the local product, and it would be a pleasant surprise not only to bring a turkey, but sausages to match.



All the turkey Mr. Braith had got was a head.

The manager made his purchase, and then hurried to the station. It was 6.25 when he arrived, but he found that the 5.40 had not yet gone. Fog!

He sat down on one of the long seats, and thought he might as well ease his overcoat pocket by placing the packet of sausages in the bag with the turkey.

He pulled out the two wooden skewers, snipped the stitches of string, and then—well, Mr. Braith discovered that all the turkey he had got was a head! The rest was a nicely shaped bag of sand.

The manager chuckled. A good joke! Ah, Raymond was a wag, without doubt!

He placed the sausages in the bag, skewered it up again, tucked the turkey's head inside this time, and chuckled once more.

Then he thought of Topper, and laughed right out—something he hadn't done for years. Topper could see a joke, but what would he say to this? Ha, ha!

Mr. Braith inquired about the trains, and from what a porter told him he worked it out that Topper could not have gone.

"The 5.5 went at ten past six, sir, and there's been nothing out since. Fog thicker than ever down the line."

The manager prepared to move and make a search for the cashier, but he suddenly sat down again, and opened his evening paper widely.

Raymond and Jackson were coming along the platform, laughing and talking, each carrying a fish basket. No turkey's head dangled, but the shape outlined was unmistakable. Turkey!

Braith chuckled again. "That was where the exhibition turkeys were, eh? These young men were hot stuff!"

As a rule Raymond and Jackson went home from No. 1 platform, and Braith and the cashier from No. 3, but the fog and the muddled service had brought the victims—one, at least—and the conspirators face to face.

Raymond and his friend sat down, then rose, and walked up and down. Braith was well covered on the long seat by other passengers, and he kept his paper wide open. A train puffed in on the next platform, and a porter shouted something. There was a general movement, and Raymond and Jackson buttonholed a passing inspector.

Topper made the exchange of baskets.

"No, sir, that's not yours. You're all right here. That's the 5.50 express."

"Can't we get in that, go on to the Junction, and then come back?"

The inspector took out his time table, and at that moment Braith moved quickly, and as he took Raymond's fish basket up in one hand he put, in its place, his own. Then he quietly threaded his way through the groups of people and went into the waiting-room.

"Good! This bag held a turkey, *and* a pound of sausages!"

With twinkling eyes he went to look for Topper, and found him, as he expected, hovering round the bookstall.

"Hullo! not off yet? Trains running anyhow, it seems," said the manager cheerfully.

"Had a look at your turkey?" was the cashier's reply.

Braith lifted his bag. "It's all right. Why?"

"Come to the waiting-room," said Topper, with significance.

"There!" he said, "that's mine," and he lugged out the bag of sand. "It's a bit too much! A joke's a joke, but—" He had to laugh, despite his attempt to be virtuously indignant. Braith solemnly unskewered his bag, and produced a plump turkey and a pound of sausages.

The cashier was amazed, and, it must be said, envious. "Might have treated us both alike," he said, dolefully.

"They did," said the manager, and then he told *his* tale.

"Let's reconnoitre," he said, with twinkling eyes. "There might be a chance for you. No train in yet. Pull that turkey's head off, or tuck it into the bag."

Raymond and Jackson still sat on the seat, and both were reading.

"There's your chance," said the manager. "Just slip round by those people, stand in the waiting-room door, and wait your chance to hop out and take Jackson's bag. Slip yours in its place, and the deed's done."

Topper edged through the waiting groups, took up his position, and, as Braith had foretold, his chance came. A "fogger" with a brazier and a supply of fog signals established himself close to the signal-box, and a little crowd, tired of waiting and glad of any diversion, watched him. Raymond and his friend rose and strolled forward, and Topper, with beating heart, issued from the shelter of the doorway and made the exchange of baskets.

He drew out—not a turkey.

The manager and cashier were glad a few minutes later to hear a porter bellow out that their train was coming into No. 3 platform, and in slow instalments they were taken to their destinations.

"Good-night," said Topper, as he left the carriage. "Then you'll see to that?"

"Yes; good-night."

* * * * *

Raymond and Jackson lived within a few doors of each other, and the former, finding, on reaching his house, that Mrs. Jackson was with his wife, whistled his friend back. There would be some fun!

Raymond told the story.

"Won't they be cross?" said Mrs. Raymond, a pretty bride of three months.

"Of course not!" replied Jackson. "A joke's a joke. If I were in their places I should laugh for hours."

At this Raymond laughed for ten consecutive minutes. Jackson joined in, and then the two wives. It *was* funny!

"Let's see the turkey," said Mrs. Raymond. "Is it a big one?"

"About ten pounds," said her husband, drawing out the skewers. "Jolly good bird," he was saying, and then his jaw dropped.

"Why—I—hang it!—how the dickens—you must have got my basket, Jackson," he said lamely, as the shape, stuffed with sand fell to the floor.

Jackson looked, then subsided weakly to the sofa, and laughed until his wife knelt by his side and implored him, if he still loved her, to stop.

He wiped his face. "Well, old chap, you can have half of mine, or come to dinner with us on Thursday. I never touched your basket.

He pulled the skewers out of the basket. "You'll remember I tied a bit of string round the leg of mine so that we should know which was mine and which was yours, and you can see——"

His voice trailed off into a gurgle of horror as he drew out—not a turkey, with a string round its leg, but—well, you know!

* * * * *

Next morning, the day before Christmas, the cashier and manager, as befitted their positions, were strictly business-like. At noon the office would close for the Christmas holidays. Books and ledgers were being put away, and desks shut down, when the manager unbent.

"Ah, Raymond, the wife wished me to thank you for what you did—the turkey, and your speech, you know. Splendid bird, she says."

"Very glad she likes it, sir," said Raymond with the ghost of a smile.

"Mrs. Topper, too, wishes me to thank you all, gentlemen," said the cashier.

Braith and Topper departed, and the seven went their various ways. Raymond and Jackson walked to the station very much down in the mouth.

"Eleven-and-eight that blessed turkey cost me," said Raymond. "It'll be roast beef for us this Christmas. Can't run to any more turkeys."

"Same here," said Jackson, lugubriously. "Bit of boiled bacon is what I'm thinking of."

* * * * *

"You men are funny creatures!" said Mrs. Raymond. "You play too many games in that office, I'm sure. The turkey came this morning. It's a beauty! Sixteen pounds."

"Came this morning?"

"Yes, Sanders brought it. Said there was no message, only that a friend had sent it with best wishes, because he'd come of age. How funny!"

"Good old Braith!" said Raymond, and there was a little, just a little, mistiness in his eyes.

"And Mrs. Jackson's got one, too. She ran down to tell me."

"Good old Topper!" said Raymond.

Which was exactly what his friend Jackson was saying.

The best Christmas present for a boy is a year's subscription to the SCOUT.

Mammoths of the Market

Two Big Porkers Weigh as Much as Three Lions.

A FIFTEEN horse-power motor-car, with a five-seated body, hood, screen, and all complete, weighs about twenty hundredweight. Fancy making your Christmas dinner off a piece of beef cut from an animal that weighed, when alive, a good deal more than that car!

Yet you may have done so. Many people have. Every year there are bullocks brought up to the Christmas Cattle Show which weigh a ton, and sometimes a good deal more.

Mr. Thomas Cook, for instance, sold for Christmas beef a black-polled Scot which weighed one ton, two hundredweight, and seventy-eight pounds.

Put the beast on one side of a giant pair of scales and it would take seventeen grown men to weigh down the opposite side. Or, as Rugby footballers are usually rather heavier than the average, you might put it that this bullock was just about equal in weight to a complete team of fifteen Rugby players.

This animal fetched the comfortable price of £50 at the Great Yarmouth Cattle Sale; but two others not quite so heavy sold, respectively, for £51 and £60 apiece.

Jumbo, the Giant Ox.

The Yarmouth animal is not a record for his kind. At Birmingham, just a year ago, there was shown a roan shorthorn which reached the colossal weight of twenty-six and a half hundredweight. He had been fed up to this enormous size by Mr. Fred Lockwood, of York, and it was said that Jumbo, as the giant ox was called, had actually lost a good many pounds on his journey from York to Birmingham.

There were three other beasts shown at the same time, all of nearly the same size—that is, a ton and a quarter apiece.

Roughly speaking, a thousand pounds of live bullock is equal to 700 pounds of dead beef, so that Jumbo's equivalent in beef approached 2,000 pounds. Allowing that each person eats half a pound of beef for his or her Christmas dinner, Jumbo would provide a Christmas meal for each grown person in a town the size of Dorchester.

Mutton is not usually regarded as food for Christmas, yet any amount of fat wethers are sold at this season. Few people except breeders and butchers have any notion of the weight of sheep, and it is safe to say that most of them very much underestimate it.

Pigs Are Heavier Than Sheep.

As a matter of fact, a wether, only just over ten months old, has been known to weigh considerably over six hundredweight. Fancy a lamb which it would take four sturdy men merely to carry!

Pigs run a bit heavier than sheep. At Birmingham last year were shown some Berkshires which, although not yet a year old, weighed nearly seven and a half hundredweight apiece. A full-grown lion weighs about 500 pounds. Two of these mighty porkers weighed, therefore, more than three large lions.

A year earlier, namely in December, 1911, the record price of £30 was given for a Berkshire bacon pig. This was at the Slough Show.

Ask a cook what is the ideal turkey, and she will say a young hen of from eight to ten pounds in weight.

But nowadays they raise chickens of that size, and as for turkeys, they will soon tie in weight with ostriches. At Little Bucksteep Farm in Sussex there was bred in 1911 a gobbler that weighed no less than thirty-nine pounds. A golden eagle—a bird which has been known to lift and fly away with a three months old baby, weighs less than one-third as much as this splendid turkey.

At Leadenhall Market, at this time of year, you can always see plenty of thirty-pound turkeys; while ducks of ten pounds each are also at times on exhibition.

Tell The Kiddies This

The Story I Want the Children to Believe About Me.—By SANTA CLAUS.

(The prize of £1 1s. for this article has been awarded to W. MAUNDY ATKINS, Rathamsted, Harpenden, Herts).

To all Right-Minded Parents, Guardians, Trustees, and Others Whom it may Concern,

Greeting,—

Whereas a rumour has reached my ears that among a certain section of modern twentieth-century juveniles of both sexes there exists a lamentable ignorance concerning me, Santa Claus, and my characteristics, and that many of those who should be my most loyal supporters even doubt my very existence, if indeed they ever heard of it,

I hereby call upon you, Parents, Guardians, Philanthropists, Principals of Schools, Trustees, and others with whom lies the responsibility for the welfare of the young of whatever rank, station, or degree whatsoever, incontinently to bestir yourselves, and to do all that lies in your power to remedy this deplorable state of affairs without further delay!

And these are the things that I would have my little friends and *protégés* to know, if so be their education has been so neglected by you that they are not already familiar with them.

Polar Bears Are My Companions.

First, that I am the merriest, jolliest, happiest, and most benevolent old gentleman in the whole world, with the reddest face and the whitest beard that ever was seen, having my dwelling far away amid the frozen fastnesses of the mysterious Northland in a beautiful ice-palace full of lovely toys and playthings, with the Polar bears for my only companions, and the North Star for my lantern, and that all correspondence should be addressed "The North Pole," and dropped into the fire instead of the pillar-box.

Here, in my ice-pinnacled palace, it should be pointed out, I sleep the whole year through, until the merry chimes that usher in the holy season of Christmas rouse me from my slumbers, when, dashing the icicles from my hair and beard, I spring joyfully from my couch, and harnessing my trusty reindeer to its sleigh, already loaded up with every imaginable toy and sweetmeat, dolls, and tops, and drums, and bon-bons, and chocolates, and other delights too numerous to mention—start out on my annual round of visits to bestow seasonable gifts upon my little friends.

Secondly, that although as old as the hills, I am just as youthful in heart as the youngest of them all, being immortal, and by nature somewhat akin to the fairies, by virtue of which nature I am able to be in every place at the same time, and being also of an adventurous turn of mind, that it pleaseth me to make my entry stealthily and at midnight by the chimney instead of by the customary and more prosaic door, and that the receptacle I prefer in which to deposit my gifts is an open and capacious stocking, which on no account should be omitted to be hung in anticipation of my call.

Rich and Poor Are Alike to Me.

Thirdly, that I am the especial friend of little children of all ranks, stations, and creeds—be sure you tell them this—loving the child of the pauper in the workhouse not one whit less than the darling of the prince in his palace, and that it is not my wish that one of them, however poor, however miserably circumstanced, should be forgotten, and that if in the moment of their mirth my little friends will give a thought to those less happily placed than themselves, and will endeavour to brighten their lot to some extent, my joy—and theirs—will be increased a thousandfold.

Furthermore, my masters, if ye for your part, realising the deeper and holier truths that lie behind the poetry and romance of this blessed season, which truths it will be your privilege to impress upon their little minds as soon as they are able to comprehend them, will help them and me in this respect, the richest blessings of the Spirit of Christmas shall duly alight upon your heads!

Given under our hand and seal at the Court of King Christmas, at Yule, in this year of Grace nineteen hundred and thirteen.

SANTA CLAUS.

HOW TO STRIKE FOR

SUCCESS

STRIKE hard! Strike home!

You must strike for yourself; no one can or will do it for you.

Take off your coat, roll up your sleeves—Strike! That is the only way to beat down the obstacles which stand between you and Security and Better Pay.

Is your position secure? Is your pay as high as you would like it to be? If they are not, who is going to strike for you? You must strike for yourself—a strong, heavy blow.

You must strike off the chain which binds you. What is it? Is it that you cannot **prove** to your employer that you are worth more than he is giving you now, worth a better and secure position?

What proof does he ask? What proof could you give him? He demands that you shall be a man who has the practical KNOWLEDGE which will give you the power to DO things. That knowledge the International Correspondence Schools can give you as they have already given it to so many others. With that knowledge at your back you will be able to strike out hard for yourself and your blow will go home—it will tell.

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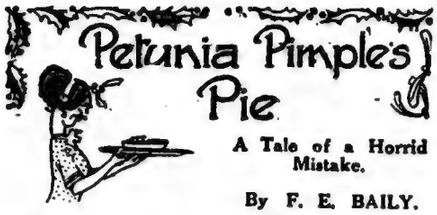

A Tale of a Horrid Mistake.

By F. E. BAILY.

THE maids of Little Tumpington are passing fair to see,
Nor do they grudge a kiss or two, if you should make so free;
Yet none had savings laid away, and property as well,
But plain . etunia Pimple—she whose father kept the "Bell."

It weighed but twice as much.

There came to court Petunia, Joe Smith and Alfred Hobbs,
Both steady-going bachelors, in admirable jobs.
"They twig her gold!" the neighbours sneered, with low and crafty hint;
"No man could love a red-haired lass with freckles and a squint!"

Yet Plain Petunia, graceless girl, encouraged them with smiles
(The boys had long avoided her, and scorned her simple wiles).
"Whichever asks, I'll marry him, and when the fish is hooked;
Invite him round to sup upon a pie I shall have cooked!"

Petunia owned a model pie, her glory and her pride;
Aunt Sarah Brown had fashioned it a month before she died.
The relic on her kitchen-shelf with pomp Petunia placed,
A fair mince-pie, adorned with sprigs of mistletoe in paste.

Alfred Hobbs his love confessed.

Six weeks Petunia copied it before the trick she learnt;
Nine pies resembled lumps of lead, and twelve of them were burnt.
At last she turned an object out, with shy and trembling touch,
Distinctly like Aunt Sarah's tart, which weighed but twice as much.

One fated evening, Alfred Hobbs, in all his Sunday best,
Kneeling within her sitting-room, his deathless love confessed;
Till plain Petunia raised him up, and cuddled him, an cried:
"Kiss me, my king, my conqueror, for I will be your bride!"

He wolfed Aunt Sarah's pie!

She made a feast, with pork, and shrimps, and all the heart could wish;
Beside her own, the model pie reposed upon a dish,
And Alfred, while some casual thing engrossed his loved one's eye,
Put up a prayer, and bowed his head, *and wolfed Aunt Sarah's pie!*

Ah me! How soon the fell mistake had smote him like a sword!
Aunt Sarah nine long months before had passed to her reward;
Afflicted by the ancient sweet, in agony he lay,
Complaining, while the doctor called and dosed him twice a day.

All gossiping, the neighbours sneered: "A chap she lacked until
Poor Alfred came a-courting her, and him she tried to kill!"
And plain Petunia, blushing so she knew not where to look,
Attained the reputation of an execrable cook.

She wore a satin wedding dress, bedecked with gilded bobs.

Then, while she suffered, Joseph Smith most cunningly consoled
Miss Pimple, yea, and married her, annexing all her gold.
She wore a satin wedding dress, bedecked with gilded bobs,
And, on her honeymoon, wrote thus to sickly Alfred Hobbs:

"No man is more despicable than somebody who can't
Distinguish from a sweetheart's pie the pastry of her aunt;
You made the neighbours jeer and mock, and yet I tell you true,
I'm jolly glad, for otherwise I might have married you!"

LITTLE BRAIN WAVES.

SOME men respect age most when it is in a bottle.

MOST men can get along with any women they are not married to.

THE ideal woman is the one who thinks you are the ideal man.

SPEAK your mind if you must, but mind how you speak.

FOOLISH girls make a speciality of breaking hearts; wise girls run repair shops.

EVERY married man feels that it takes but one to make a quarrel.

EVEN if a man has no axe to grind, he can usually get a job turning the grindstone for some one who has.

IF you want work done choose a busy man to do it—the other sort have no time.

PLUCK is the secret of success—but sometimes you can find nobody to pluck.

IT'S pretty tough on the oldest inhabitant if it's really true that the good die young.

THE things that do not concern a woman are generally the things that give her the most concern.

FIRST love is merely a sample, and the first kiss just an appetiser.

WHY is it that women are so fond of sweets and men of bitters?

THE difference between genius and insanity is only that the lunatic is, at least, sure of his board and lodgings.

THE difference between a henpecked and a masterful husband is that one gives in at once while the other does it the next day.

STOLEN fruit always tastes sweet. It's the feeling in the region of the waist-belt which tells you afterwards whether it was really sweet or not.

10-in. 2s. 6d. 12-in. 4s.

THEY offer better music, greater variety, the finest reproduction, and DOUBLE WEAR. The repertoire of Christmas music is the most extensive of all. New issues, now on sale at all dealers and stores, include Novel Christmas Descriptive Records, Minstrels, Miniature Pantomime—"Cinderella," Children's Toy Instrument Marches, Ballads, and the Latest Popular Hits, and the Newest Tango Dance Music. Remember they . .

WEAR TWICE AS LONG!

Here are a few selected titles from the Christmas Columbia-Rena List—now ready:

12-inch—4s. each.

Mr. MORGAN KINGSTON, Tenor.
419 { Thora. / Good-bye.
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A GORGEOUS MINSTREL RECORD.
420 { Fireside Minstrels—In 2 Parts. Introducing songs, choruses, patter, and orchestra.

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2264 { Death of Little Nell (*Dickens*). / Sidney Carton's Farewell (*Dickens*).

CARRIE HERWIN, Contralto.
2272 { The Gipsy's Warning. / Down the Vale.

TWO GREAT POPULAR HITS.
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SERIAL STORY.

The Story of a Girl who Tried to Get Out of Difficulties by Playing Cards and Backing Horses.

By SIDNEY MATTINGLY.

(Author of "The Terror by Night.")

CHAPTER XII.

Shown Up.

MECHANICALLY Hilda turned and walked down the passage into the tiny sitting-room of the flat. Montague Passmore followed her closely. A sort of evil amusement showed upon his face. The girl was his. She could not escape him now. Her evident fear and loathing of him seemed only to add to the keenness of his triumph.

"I got your message," he began in his silkiest voice. "In the circumstances it will be as well for us to get married without delay. Besides, I don't care for you to go back to your work at the Stores. To-day is Thursday. I've made all arrangements so that we can be married early next week. You can stay here till then with Cora Stafford."

Hilda did not speak. She had tried to realise before that this man was to be her husband. But his words struck her with the force of a terrible blow. Early next week! It was like a sentence of death. The fear in her eyes deepened, and her senses swam.

"Well, haven't you got anything to say to me?" asked Passmore after a pause. "Doesn't the arrangement I've suggested suit you?"

"There is nothing else for me to do," Hilda managed to reply, in a low, tremulous voice.

Passmore laughed harshly. A sudden sound made him break off and glance towards the door. Someone had entered the flat. He frowned ominously. He was enjoying this *tête-à-tête* and did not want it interrupted.

A moment later, the door opened and Cora Stafford stood upon the threshold.

There was dead silence for a second. Neither Hilda nor Passmore had expected to see Cora there that afternoon, when she should have been at her post at Merton's Stores; but it was not her presence only that surprised them.

The woman who stood upon the threshold of the little sitting-room was a Cora Stafford neither of them had ever seen before. Her face was pale, and traces of tears were to be seen upon her cheeks; but it was her eyes that seemed to have changed the most of all. They were full of pain, as she turned her glance on Hilda—pain, mingled with pity and remorse. But as she looked away from the girl to the man who stood by the window, a cold smile upon his face, the pain seemed to fade from her glance, and contempt took its place.

During the last hour Cora Stafford had tasted the dregs of humiliation. She had offered her love, she had offered herself, to a man who did not love her. Bitter despair had entered into her heart when Charlie Merton kindly but firmly and finally had told her that what she hoped for could never be.

When he had left her, all the world had seemed dark before her. She had wept scalding tears of anguish. A fierce wave of anger had rushed over her—anger against Merton, anger against Hilda, who, in spite of all her own lies and machinations, still held the first place in his heart.

Then strangely and suddenly had come a revulsion of feeling. The anger died in her heart. She loved Charlie Merton. It was the first pure love she had known in all her stormy, passionate life, and she forgot her own suffering in thinking of his.

She had done her best to betray the girl he loved into the hands of a man she knew to be a blackguard. For the first time she realised what she had done in all its naked horror. Out of the remorse that flooded her heart a sudden resolve was born. She had lied to Hilda and had deceived her, but it was better to tell the truth late than never.

With a prayer that it was not too late, she set off to her flat. Thus came about the unlooked-for interruption of Passmore's talk with the girl he already looked upon as his. Cora broke the silence that greeted her entry.

"I lied to you last night," she said to Hilda in a strange, low voice. "Everything I told you was lies. There's no reason why you should marry Montague Passmore. There's every reason why you shouldn't."

Hilda did not reply. Her eyes were fixed searchingly on the girl she had thought her friend.

"I don't wonder at your doubting me," Cora went on dully. "But I'm telling the truth now. Look at his face." She pointed to Passmore. "Can't you see it written there? I've been his tool long enough. I've got something else to tell you. Listen. Montague Passmore and I were in the same office as your father and brother four years ago. A cheque was forged for a big sum, and Dick was arrested and sentenced to five years' penal servitude. But he didn't forge the cheque. Passmore did it. He managed to throw suspicion on to your brother, and—I helped him."

Hilda shrunk back with a gesture of horror.

Then Passmore spoke. His face had taken on a strange, yellowish tinge, but his voice was calm and collected.

"Don't listen to her ravings, Hilda," he said. "She must be mad. Even if her story were true, she'd be as bad as I am. But it isn't. It's a pack of lies." He thought for a moment. "You can't stay here with Cora in that state. You wouldn't be safe. The best thing will be for us to get married even sooner than I said."

Hilda did not answer, but something in her face sent a pang of fear through Passmore's heart. In marriage with this girl lay his only chance of safety.

He pulled the marriage licence from his pocket.

"You can't go back on your promise now, Hilda," he almost whined. "See, I've got the licence. Let's be married to-morrow, and go right away at once."

From the curtain behind him a thin, white hand shot silently out and snatched the piece of parchment from his grasp. Passmore started back in amazement. The curtain was brushed on one side and from behind it there stepped the figure of a girl.

It was Violet Ward.

"Don't you ever go back on your promises, Monty?" she asked with a jarring laugh.

Passmore continued to stare at her, but made no reply. The shock of her sudden appearance had unnerved him. Even Hilda started painfully. Though she knew of Violet's presence in the flat she had never dreamt that she had been hidden behind the curtain during her conversation with Passmore.

"So you never break *your* promises?" Violet repeated, "or perhaps you've got rather a short memory. Do you remember making a promise to me four years ago—a promise to marry me? I suppose a trifle like that slipped your memory. Is that why you ran away and left me in the lurch?"

Passmore shrank back before the girl's harsh voice and bitter words. Then he turned to bluster.

"Your tale won't go down with me," he said, with a show of anger. "I never promised anything of the sort. But I see through your game. Dick Warren brought me your message yesterday—let me see, I was to marry you, wasn't I, or else you'd trump up some story about me and inform the police? I suppose you know what happens to blackmailers?"

Violet Ward laughed.

"I know what happens to blackguards," she said. "And I've changed my mind about marrying you, Monty. I thought being married, even to you, would be better than the life I've been leading lately. But while I've been behind that curtain, I've been thinking as well as listening. You needn't bother about marrying me, Monty. I'll let you off that."

"I'm much obliged to you, I'm sure," sneered Passmore. "Perhaps you'll be good enough to hand me back my property. After that, I don't think we need detain you any longer."

Violet Ward still held the marriage licence in her hand. She made a sudden movement as if to tear it in pieces. Then she changed her mind and handed it back to Passmore. "I hope you'll find it useful," she said with a strange smile. "I'm off now, but I shouldn't wonder if we meet again—before long."

Without another word she left the room.

Passmore turned to Hilda.

"What's it to be, Hilda?" he asked. "Say that you don't believe the lies these women have been telling. I've got the licence. We can be married to-morrow. Then we can snap our fingers at the world."

Hilda turned on him a look of withering contempt. She did not speak, but Passmore read his answer in her eyes. His power over Hilda—the trump card that he had relied on to protect him against the revenge of Dick Warren—was gone for ever. Defeat stared him in the face—and defeat meant retribution. A sudden picture of gloomy prison walls rose before his mental vision.

He remembered with a start Violet Ward's last words. Had they been a threat? Had she gone to urge Dick Warren to make use of the deadly evidence she had given him of his guilt?

There was only one chance of safety—the coward's last resource—flight. Without another glance at the two girls—one his victim, the other saved from the same fate as by a miracle—he slunk from the room and from the flat.

Ten minutes later he entered his bank and cashed a large cheque. Hardly waiting to count the notes that were handed to him across the counter, Passmore hurried out and, hailing a taxi, gave the address of his flat.

With frantic haste he discarded the fashionable clothes he wore. When a few minutes later he slipped out of the building he took no luggage with him. He was dressed in a shabby suit with a tweed cap pulled down over his eyes, and few of his acquaintances would have recognised in him the usually well-dressed man about town and race-course habitué.

And he was recovering his nerve. He had his

(Continued on page 630.)

DO you realise the risk you run riding in a crowded train or tram without a germ-killing Peps tablet in your mouth?

Every sneeze, *every cough fills the air* you breathe with countless disease-germs that immediately make for any weak spot in your throat and chest Keep a little breatheable Peps tablet dissolving in your mouth to ward off the infection, and you will not be "full of cold" on the morrow, with the possibility of pleurisy or deadly pneumonia supervening.

You breathe in the germs that start infectious coughs or colds, and it is necessary to breathe in Peps to kill them and rout unpleasant and dangerous complications like *bronchitis, sore throat, influenza, catarrh, pleurisy, inflammation, pneumonia, etc.*

PEPS

Women have the Advantage of Men.

Women have the advantage of men — if a woman's hair falls out she can at least wear her own false hair by saving her "combings," but a man is obliged to wear "somebody else's hair" or none at all. It is an ugly dilemma, and can be dodged with a little care. Mr. Geo. R. Sims, the famous author of "The Ever Open Door," now being played to immense audiences at the Alwych Theatre, was once confronted with just the dilemma towards which you may perhaps be drifting now.

So keen was he to preserve his hair that he made many experiments, and at last discovered Tatcho.

It is probably a hundred to one against there being any reason why you should not save your hair as Mr. Geo. R. Sims saved his. Try the same remedy. It will be only what one might expect that the same remedy should bring the same result. In order that you may make a serious test the Company formed by Mr. Geo. R. Sims will send a large size 4s. 6d. trial bottle for 1s. 10d. if you post the coupon below without delay. If you prefer it, your own Chemist or Stores will supply you with your 4s. 6d. bottle for 1s. 10d.

SPECIAL OFFER.

We authorise our Chief Chemist to send to the applicant who forwards this authority a regular 4s. 6d. bottle of TATCHO, carriage and packing paid, to the applicant's own door, at the nominal price of 1s. 10d.

Mr Geo. R. Sims
Hair Restorer Co
5 Great Queen Street, London, W.C.

THE GIRL GAMBLER (*cont. from page 629*). fortune in his pocket. In a few hours he would be beyond reach of pursuit. He laughed softly to himself. He would cheat his enemies yet.

CHAPTER XIII.
Happy at Last.

ONCE more Hilda Warren was alone with her thoughts. Montague Passmore had gone, she hoped never to cross her path again, and as soon as he had taken his departure Cora Stafford had left her too.

"You're not the only person I've lied to, Hilda," she had said brokenly. "I don't expect you to forgive me now. But perhaps you will one day. I'm doing all I can to make amends. I'm going to see Mr. Merton now. He's one of the people I've helped Montague Passmore to deceive. Perhaps you can guess why I did it." Cora paused. "I loved him. But I'm going to tell him the whole truth now."

Hilda had scarcely heard Cora's words; she had not understood even those she did hear. She cherished no resentment against the unhappy girl who, under the guise of friendship, had done her best to wreck her life. The only emotion she felt was a deep relief that she had been mercifully delivered at the eleventh hour.

The events of the past day and night seemed part of an evil dream. True, the awakening meant a return to the dull routine of her old life; but even her work at Merton's Stores seemed brighter in contrast to what might have been.

And she would no longer be alone in her fight against the world. Dick had come back. The brother whom her father had believed to be a criminal was innocent of the crime for which he had suffered so cruelly. His return and the knowledge of his innocence would help to brighten her father's last years.

But there was one shadow on Hilda's gladness. Only now that the terror which had been hanging over her had faded away did she realise it to the full.

Cora had worked cruelly, cleverly, to separate her from the man she loved.

Hilda remembered with a flush of shame that scene on the race-course where Charlie had seen her drinking champagne with Passmore among the jostling crowd at the refreshment buffet. He had tried to save her, to save her from herself, but she had spurned his offer.

There was a reason, of course. It was because she had chosen to believe Cora's cleverly concocted lies without giving him a chance of proving them false. She had lost the man she loved.

These thoughts were in her mind when she realised quite suddenly that someone had entered the room.

She looked up. Charlie Merton stood before her.

Between those two, lies and deception had opened up a chasm of misunderstanding. There were many things that had to be explained between them.

But this was not a time for words of explanation. Their eyes met in a long glance of perfect understanding.

Hilda had wept no tears during her dreadful ordeal. She had been dry-eyed through all the terrors of body and soul that had assailed her during the past four-and-twenty hours. But now the tears came.

With Charlie Merton's arm around her and her head upon his shoulder, she wept, but her tears were not the wild tears of sorrow, rather the happy tears that come when sorrow and pain are past.

Presently she grew calmer, and they sat down side by side to talk—not of the black past, but of the bright future. It was thus that Dick Warren found them.

When he entered Merton rose to his feet.

"I'm the happiest man alive, and I should like you to be the first person to congratulate me, Dick," he said quietly. "Hilda has promised to marry me as soon as you and your father can spare her."

* * * * *

That evening Dick and Hilda Warren left London for the Devonshire village where their father was staying, all ignorant of the strange happenings that had given him back a son and had so nearly lost him a daughter.

As the two stood on the long departure platform at Paddington Station, talking to Merton, who had come to see them off, the long arm of coincidence stretched forth and for a second reopened a chapter all were anxious to forget for ever. There was a sudden commotion a little way down the platform, and a small, curious crowd quickly gathered round. Idly Hilda and her companions turned to watch.

Then the crowd parted, and a gaily-dressed girl stepped out. It was Violet Ward, a look of triumph in her eyes.

Close behind her followed three other figures. Two were clearly detectives in plain clothes. The man who walked between them with handcuffs on his wrists and craven fear written across his face was Montague Passmore. He had stood, as he thought, on the threshold of freedom; but the door had suddenly closed in his face. The only freedom he would know for many years was such freedom as can be found behind stone walls and iron bars.

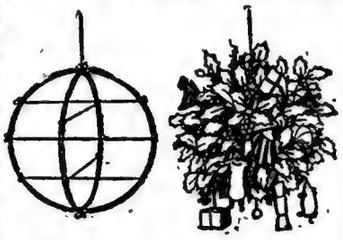
A momentary faintness seized Hilda at this unexpected encounter. But she looked into the eyes of her lover, and the past, with all its terrors, its doubts, and misunderstandings, was forgotten in the message that she read there.

THE END.

Picture Pars

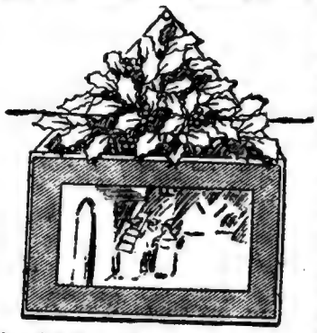
HOW TO MAKE A HOLLY BALL.

AN excellent way of decorating your home at Christmastide is by the aid of holly balls. These can be made quite easily. First of all procure two small wooden hoops, place one inside the other crosswise, and tie them together in this position. Then obtain a few lengths of string and tie them across the hoops in the manner shown in the first sketch. You then fill this in with holly, small flags, and other Christmas toys. A complete holly ball is seen in the second illustration.



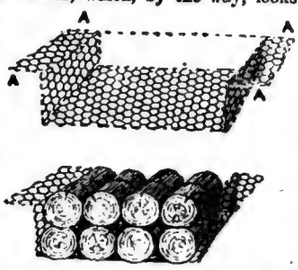
A DECORATING HINT.

To keep your Christmas decorations secure, a good plan is to take a piece of strong thread, and, by the aid of two drawing pins, fix it to the wall in the manner shown in the accompanying illustration. This will serve the purpose of keeping the sprays of holly upright, and will also enable you to put up a larger quantity. For the sake of clearness, in the picture the thread is shown large in comparison to the rest of the sketch; of course, in reality it would be scarcely noticeable.



STORE CHRISTMAS LOGS THIS WAY.

THE accompanying illustration depicts a very novel way of storing Christmas logs, instead of having to place them on the hearth, which, by the way, looks very unsightly. Get a piece of wire-netting, 1½ yards long and 2 feet wide. Bend it as shown in the sketch, turn the parlour or other table up, and fix it with carpet nails along A A. Turn the table back again and your logs can be stored, as in the second sketch, out of sight, easily reached, and you can have a blazing fire without disputing as to who shall go to the wood-shed and get a fresh supply.



SAVES INFECTION.

THE accompanying illustration shows a very neat idea which is now being adopted by tradesmen who, during their calls, have to speak through a speaking tube. The idea consists of getting a piece of bamboo or hollow stick about four inches long and sharpened at one end. When speaking through a tube, this is inserted as per illustration, so that the mouth does not touch the tube. This idea, especially at Christmas time, when speaking tubes are in great use, should be adopted by all tradesmen.

IS YOUR HEART BAD?

Feel your pulse. Is it regular. Do you ever have Palpitation, Shortness of Breath, Skipping a Beat, Cold Hands or Feet, Pains under the Left Shoulder Blade, Trouble in Lying on Left Side, Dizzy Spells, Drowsiness after Eating, Violent Starts in your Sleep, Fulness in the Throat, Neuralgia around the Heart.

If you have any of these symptoms, is it not time to correct them? Oxien has proved an almost infallible cure of Functional Heart Troubles and their many complications. Let us send you a Free Packet, that you may, Without Cost, try its effect upon your trouble.

We will send the week's TRIAL TREATMENT, relying on your telling your friends if it does you good. Full particulars of use and of some of the cures with every packet. It costs you nothing to try. THE GIANT OXIE CO. Ltd. (Dept. 6 FF), 8 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.

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COMPLETE SHORT STORY.

How a Husband, Whose Wife Left Him, Tramped the Streets, as a Wandering Musician, Until He Found Her.

By F. C. SMALE.

CHAPTER I.

The Blow.

CHRISTMAS EVE! A calm frost, relentless and iron-handed without. In the distance the clang of city bells, ringing in the joys that would come to some, the sorrows that were in store for many.

Alice Crewe sat over her sewing, and a tear dropped on the snow-white baby-clothes at which she was working. She was thinking of last Christmas—only one short year ago—when she had joined her life with Seymour Crewe's for better or worse. Alas! it had been for the latter.

Seymour Crewe, the operatic tenor, whose golden voice had won the heart of the simple country maiden, had proved to be a drunkard! Qualified, as far as his voice was concerned, to play leading *rôles*, his vice kept him in the ranks of the chorus, and precariously even there.

To-night he was singing in the opening performance of a pantomime at one of the leading theatres, it was true, but pantomime for Seymour Crewe, who had confessed during their brief courtship his ambition to play leading parts in the Wagnerian masterpieces!

It was pitiful, but more pitiful still was the young wife's nervous start every now and again, as some fancied sound suggested his return.

Midnight! The bells rang on for a while and then stopped after one universal crash of welcome to Christmas. Alice Crewe rose wearily and tip-toed to their second room; they had but two. There lay their baby—their baby-boy—sleeping peacefully, happy in innocent oblivion.

Hark! What was that? She returned hastily to the sitting-room. A fumbling at the door below proclaimed the arrival of her husband. Then an uncertain step on the narrow stair, and Seymour Crewe stood swaying on the threshold. His handsome, dissipated face was flushed, and his tawdry, fur-lined coat, the half-contemptuous gift of some great man who had felt a momentary gust of pity for the talented scamp, hung awry on his shoulders. He gazed at his wife with lack-lustre eyes.

"Hullo, m'dear!" he hiccoughed. "Merr' Chris'-mas!" Then he laughed foolishly.

"Hush!" said Alice Crewe. "Baby is sleeping."

Her husband threw out his chest and struck an exaggerated stage attitude.

"Ha, the child!" he exclaimed. "The future Caruso! I would hear him sing. Lead me to him."

He moved with unsteady steps towards the door leading into the bedroom, but his wife glided before him and turning the key, thrust it into her bosom.

"Will you have some supper, Sey?" she asked, striving to keep her voice steady.

He stood regarding her with a frown.

"Wha' did you lock the door for?" he asked harshly.

"Don't be foolish, Sey!" she replied, with seeming carelessness. "How did the show go?"

Her efforts to draw his attention from his purpose seemed successful, and he dropped into a chair.

"Show," he muttered vacantly. "Wha' show?"

"Why, the *Humming Bird*—the panto."

The last word was unfortunate. It reminded the half-drunken man of his downfall.

"Panto!" he cried. "Bah! I, Seymour Crewe, howling trash with a gang of supers and ballet-girls!" Then he suddenly grew maudlin. "But we had a good time afterwards. Dear boys and girls. They know that Seymour Crewe is a star among farthing candles. They stood me a bottle of the best, dear ol' boys an' girls!"

He drooped drowsily for a few moments, and Alice Crewe hoped that he was going to sink into a drunken slumber, but all at once the thought of his child recurred to his bemuddled brain, and he rose with an obstinate look on his flushed face.

"Arty! I want Arty!" he said sullenly. "Bring him out."

Alice Crewe's mouth set firmly. He should not touch the child in his then condition if she could help it.

"No," she said. "Be sensible, Sey. I told you baby is asleep." Her heart beat quickly. She knew how obstinate the drink made him.

"Bring him out!" he repeated doggedly.

His wife made no reply, but set coffee and rosll on the table. Seymour Crewe swept it crashing to the floor.

"Curse your supper!" he exclaimed. "Give me that key!"—and he lurched towards her.

"Sey!" cried his wife breathlessly, her face white. "Are you mad?"

He seized her roughly. She struggled with all her power. It was no use calling for aid. The only other inmates of the house were a decrepit old cobbler and his invalid son, neither of them of any use in this emergency. Then Seymour Crewe struck the woman he had sworn to cherish, struck her brutally across the face.

She staggered for a moment, more from the horror of the thing than from physical hurt, but her maternal instinct gave her strength to hurl him from her. His foot caught in an upturned edge of carpet, and he fell heavily, striking his head against a chair. Alice Crewe stood panting, terror-stricken, her face scarlet where he had struck her.

"Oh, what have I done!" she whispered fearfully, and she knelt beside the prostrate form.

"Stunned—only stunned!" she murmured. "Thank Heaven!" She bathed his brow with water and placed a cushion beneath his head. Seymour Crewe opened his eyes and regarded his wife vacantly.

"Dear ol' boys an' girls!" he muttered feebly. "Goo'-night!"—and immediately relapsed into a sound slumber.

Alice Crewe stood and regarded the sleeping form. And this was her girlhood's hero! This sodden wretch was the man whom her maiden heart had almost worshipped as an idol. Alas, she had found the feet of clay! How still it was! She heard some merry revellers in the distance. There would be no merriment for her this Christmas! Happily, her parents were both dead. Perhaps had they been alive at the time of her marriage they would have warned her. Yet would she have heeded their warning? Probably not. Well, she had chosen, and she must abide by the result.

Then a sudden wave of revolt swept over her, and the spot on her face burned like a flame. After all, why should she suffer the purgatory that lay in store for her did she cling to this dissipated ruffian? And her child! In one of his drunken fits her husband might injure, might kill it.

No, she would break the bond which united her to this life of horror. She would go and hide herself from this man. She would go now before he awoke. The world was wide, and there must be work for her in it somewhere. She took a sheet of paper from a drawer and wrote on it.

"I have left you for ever. It will be best for both. I cannot bear that you should strike me again.—
ALICE.

This she placed in an envelope and left on the table where he could not fail to see it. Then she put on her long heavy coat and her hat, and, going to the outer door, listened breathlessly. All was still. She returned to the sleeping man and peered into his face.

"Good-bye, dead love!" she whispered tremulously. "Good-bye, oh, foolish, foolish dream of happiness!" Then she crept into the bedroom and lifted out her baby, still sleeping soundly. She wrapped it, first in the warm blanket, then over all a shawl. She was ready. Extinguishing the light, she stole from the room and down the stairs, down the creaking stairs and out into the night.

The biting cold made her catch her breath for a moment, and she drew her babe closer to her breast. Then, with one look upwards at the clear stars, she went forth to seek a kindlier destiny, to wrench from Fate, if possible, some little happiness denied her in the life now left behind for ever.

Upstairs the sleeping man stirred uneasily.

"Alice!" he muttered. "Alice!"—and then relapsed into a deeper slumber.

CHAPTER II.

Remorse.

THE grey light of dawn was dimly illumining the window when Seymour Crewe awoke. He passed his hand across his racking forehead and gazed stupidly about him. Where was he? What had happened? Confound it! How his head throbbed. He had made another night of it, he supposed. Ah, he remembered. They had all adjourned to the Sock and Buskin after the show, and there had kept the Christmas Eve.

He had a vague recollection of coming home, but at that point memory failed him, and any effort of thought just then was agony. He raised himself carefully on an elbow and looked around with bloodshot eyes. Why the deuce wasn't he in bed? He must have been pretty far gone.

"Alice!" he cried huskily; then again, with a rising note of irritation: "Alice!" Where was the woman? He rose, steadying himself by the table. He was sober enough now, painfully so, and in an evil temper. Ugh! How bitterly cold it was! No light, no fire! A pretty home for a man of his ability! He went to the door of the bedroom and angrily flung it open.

"Alice, where are you?" he shouted, and, with a curious trick of the brain, the melody suggested by the words thereupon commenced to repeat itself in his

(Continued on page 632.)

Wonders of a Small Fruit.

Is it not obvious that the fruit which gives character to such a noble preparation as the Christmas pudding must be something more than ordinary? The Christmas pudding of the British Isles is world-famous—and justly so. Imagine what it would be like without Currants. The mere suggestion makes one shudder! That famous institution owes its fine flavour to the presence of Currants. Other well-known sweets similarly indebted are the mince-pie, the eccles cake, the Currant cake, and a host of others. A general principle that holds good under all circumstances is that where there are Currants there is sweetness—and what a sweetness, what a charming caressing flavour is in the fruit! Of course the use of the fruit is most beneficial to health, to say nothing of the economy of it. The following seasonable recipes have been specially prepared by a leading expert in domestic cookery.

Christmas Pudding.

2 lbs. raisins, 2 lbs. currants, 2 lbs. flour, 2 lbs. beef suet (chopped finely), 1 lb. breadcrumbs, 6 eggs, 1½ lbs. treacle, 1 teaspoonful ginger.

METHOD.—Warm the treacle and add to it a gill of milk. Mix this with all the other ingredients thoroughly, the fruit being carefully prepared previously. Pour the mixture into greased basins or moulds, and boil from four to six hours.

Christmas Cake (rich).

½ lb. butter, ½ lb. Barbados sugar, ½ lb. flour, 4 eggs, 1½ lbs. currants, 4 ozs. candied peel, ¾ teaspoonful mixed spice, grated lemon rind, essence of almond, ¼ teaspoonful salt, ⅛ teaspoonful carbonate of soda, 1 dessertspoonful of milk.

METHOD.—Cream the butter and sugar until very light; beat in the eggs, one at a time alternately with the flour; then add all the dry ingredients and carbonate of soda dissolved in milk. Grease one 8-inch or two 6-inch cake tins and line with two or three thicknesses of greased paper. Bake the large cake three and a half to four hours—the small cakes two to two and a half hours—in a very carefully-regulated oven.

Mincemeat.

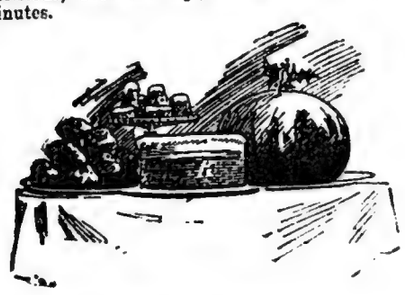
Three large lemons, 3 large tart cooking apples, ½ lb. stoned raisins, 1 lb. currants, 1 lb. finely chopped beef suet, ½ lb. moist sugar, 1 oz. minced candied peel, 1 gill rum or brandy, 2 tablespoonfuls orange marmalade.

METHOD.—Grate the rind of the lemons, squeeze out the juice and strain into a basin. Boil the remainder of the lemons in water until tender enough to pulp. Bake the apples and pulp them also. Add the remaining ingredients to the first pulp, and mix them all together. Fill the mincemeat into jars, cover each closely with parchment paper and tie up. Keep in a cool but dry place and use as required.

Eccles Cakes.

½ lb. short crust or puff paste, 6 ozs. currants, ½ teaspoonful mixed spice, 3 ozs. sugar, ½ oz. butter.

METHOD.—Divide the paste into twelve pieces rolled out, and cut into rounds of even size; mix the currants, sugar and spice together; put about a dessertspoonful on each round of paste, a tiny bit of butter and a few drops of water. Moisten the edges, draw together over the top, flatten a little with the hand, turn over and roll very lightly, then place them in a baking tin and brush over with beaten egg. Make three or four cuts (incisions) over the top; bake about twenty-five minutes.



Bright amusing games to tickle the Xmas guest, Are in the Xmas ROYAL. of Xmas numbers best

THE SINGER AND THE SONG—(Continued from page 631.)
throbbing head with maddening persistency. He strode into the room in a mood for murder, then fell back in amazement. Empty! He returned to the sitting-room, and, with shaking hands, managed to light the lamp. Then he caught sight of the note. With a fierce oath he tore it open and read.

"I have left you for ever. It will be best for both. I cannot bear that you should strike me again.—ALICE."

The paper fell from his fingers and fluttered to the floor. Strike her! Had he struck her? He knit his tortured brows in a vain effort of memory. Well, he supposed he must have done so. But couldn't she make allowances. She must have known that he was upset by the drink, or he would never have done that.

Struck her! Merciful heavens, no! His Alice! Seymour Crewe sank into a chair and buried his face in his hands. Curse the drink! That it should have brought him to this! But where had she gone? Surely she meant to come back? He picked up the note and read it over and over until every word was burnt into his brain.

No, she meant it. 'For ever.' He had lost her—and Arty, his baby. Of course she had taken Arty with her. Then the man broke down and sobbed pitifully.

Suddenly bells rang out. Christmas morning! The bells were ringing in Christmas. And mingling with their chorus was that eternal melody which haunted his brain.

"*Vowing to love me, Alice, whate'er might betide.*"

Yes, she had sworn that, and now he had driven her away! He must find her. He must bring her back! Yes, he would search, if it were through the wide world until he found her—her and Arty. And he would drink no more, for he loved her. Dear Heaven, yes, he loved her, and would crave her pardon on his knees, for what he had done. The theatre might go. He would have some food first, though Heaven knew he had small appetite, then he would start upon his pilgrimage. Searching, ever searching for her.

He would sing his way along as did the troubadours of old until he found her and held her in his arms once more. Then they would be happy again, and all the sin and sorrow of the past should be condoned. So, vowing, Seymour Crewe knelt and prayed as he had never done since, as a white-robed chorister, he had filled his mother's heart with pride and joy and hopeful ambition for her son's future.

He rose with his head clearer, his eye brighter. Perhaps the tears had washed the fumes of liquor from his brain somewhat. He brewed himself strong tea, and made shift to eat a little. Then he searched the scantily furnished rooms and found a little store of money in a drawer. He left sufficient on the table to pay the week's rent now due; there were no arrears or debts, Alice Crewe had seen to that. And, without arousing the cobbler who let the rooms to them, Seymour Crewe went forth into the crisp, frosty air. His quest had commenced.

CHAPTER III.

One Year Later.

"SALOON BAR" stood out in large letters against a hospitable glow of red curtain. On the door was silhouetted the gaunt shadow of a vagrant who crept close to the red glow as though for warmth. He thrust his face close to a narrow crack showing at the hinges and sang. He had no accompanying instrument and his voice shook with the cold which gripped his very bones, yet there was a curious thrill, a suggestion of tragic feeling which arrested the attention, if not the appreciation, of the revellers within.

"Cats!" exclaimed one wit. "Shoo!"

A burly man, half gone in liquor, threw open the door and earned the execrations of the more susceptible to cold.

"Wotcher cryin' about out there?" he growled. "Call that a song for Christmas Eve! Give us a carol! 'Good old King Winchinsh.'"

"Or ragtime," put in the wit. "That's more in his line by the look of him."

The singer had come forward into the light and stood shivering before them. He wore an overcoat which had once been fur-lined, but was now almost bare. His crisp, curly hair was grizzled at the temples and his cheeks were sunken. Yet his eye was clear, and he even wore a collar.

"I would oblige you, gentleman, if I could," said he, "but I sing only one song."

There was a roar of laughter.

"He is like my aunt's gramophone!" cried the facetious one. "You want a few new records, old man!"

Then the burly man intervened.

"Drink this," he said commandingly, and held out a glass of spirit.

The vagrant turned a little whiter.

"I—I thank you!" he faltered. "It is kindly meant, but a little coffee or cocoa, if I may——"

The burly man frowned.

"Wha'!" he cried. "A lime-juicer! A blooming teetotaliser!"

"You'd better skip!" observed the landlord, who was serving in person behind the bar. Vagrants who scorned good things like hot whisky were bad for trade.

"Skip!" he repeated meaningly.

The intruder turned with a sigh.

"Very well! Good evening, gentlemen!"

"'Ere you are, old sport!" said one, thrusting a coin into his hand. "Something towards a new song."

Example is infectious, and a dozen contributions showered forth.

"We have given this," said the facetious man gravely, "strictly on condition that you do not sing. Make no mistake about that. And you'll find a coffee-shop further down on the other side of the street."

"Thank you, sir!"—and the vagrant vanished.

It was snowing, but his boots were sound, and he ploughed his way doggedly along until he came to the shop. After a large cup of scalding hot coffee and a plate of cold beef he felt the warmth return to his body, and his face became less gaunt. He stood erect, a man again.

"Do you happen to know of anyone called Crewe—Mrs. Crewe—in this town?" he asked of the buxom woman who had waited upon him.

She knit her brows.

"Crewe? No, can't say that I know the name."

"Ah, thank you!"

The questioner sighed heavily and went out into the night once more. Buttoning his ragged coat tightly and pulling up a muffler around his throat, he stepped off the pavement and commenced to sing.

"*One year past, this even,*
And thou wert by my side."

His voice faltered momentarily, and some glanced at him curiously. The fellow was drunk, no doubt, yet he could sing! There were a goodly number of people about, and it was Christmas Eve. Many coppers were dropped into the little tin cup which he carried ostentatiously in front of him, and once or twice silver glimmered white in the lamplight. The singer reached the end of the street. Here he stopped and counted his takings by the light of a friendly lamp.

Five shillings and fourpence! Not bad for twenty minutes! Sufficient to procure a comfortable bed and a substantial breakfast in the morning—and even a Christmas dinner on the top of that!

He half turned as a woman hurried past. She wore a heavy fur boa about her neck, but the lamplight fell momentarily on her face as she passed, and the vagrant staggered back with a little gasping cry.

"Alice!" he whispered.

But the woman had not noticed him. He followed her down the dark road, and so rapid were her steps that he would inevitably have lost sight of her had she not turned into one of the little gates. A brief gleam of ruddy light shone forth as a door was opened, then it closed, and all was dark again.

The vagrant peered at the gate. A brass plate gleamed faintly. He struck a match and read the inscription:

ALICE BARRINGTON,
Teacher of Music,
Piano, and Voice."

Barrington! Her maiden name! He had found her! For a few moments he murmured a thanksgiving, then he lifted his voice and sang there in the snow and in the darkness as he had never sung before.

A CHRISTMAS PESSIMIST.

Mr. Turkey Wishbone (muttering to himself): "How can I be happy at Christmas. Everyone makes an awful face of me at the dinner table, but what's my end? Why, I go to the dogs."

CHAPTER IV.

The Bells Ring Out Again.

"*I've sought thee by lakelet,*
I've sought thee by the hill,
And in the pleasant wild wood
When winds blew cold and chill."

The clear notes rose in the snowy night, and the wind buffeted them in the darkness, but still the singer sang on:

"*Oh, there, amid the starshine,*
Alice, I know, art thou!"

The song ceased, and the singer stood trembling. Ah! He drew a deep breath. The door had opened.

"Sey!"

The voice was quivering as though with mingled hope and fear. There was the rustle of a woman's dress as she ran down to the gate.

"Sey! Are you there?"

The vagrant stepped into the circle of red light which shone forth from the open doorway.

"Alice!" he said, with a catch of his breath.

"Sey, Sey! It is you! Oh, thank Heaven!"—and in a moment her arms were about him.

"Oh, Sey! My poor boy! I tried to find you. I tried; but they said you had gone away, no one knew whither!"

"You—you tried to find me?" he repeated dazedly.

"Yes, yes! But you must not stand here. Come in, come in! You are shaking—and, oh, so altered!"

She led him unresistingly into the house, and there, seated in an armchair by a welcoming hearth, he told her all. How, when he found she had gone, he realised his baseness and felt overcome with shame and remorse.

"I determined to go forth singing that one song—our song—until I found you!" said he. "It should be my penance. I would sing my way from town to town, from city to city, always hoping, always searching. Sometimes I did well, oftener I did ill. I made inquiries everywhere, but always in vain.

"Sometimes I would come upon what I thought was a clue, then hope would run high, and I would sing at my best. Men came to me—rich men in furs and motor-cars, offering to find me a place in some theatre or opera-house. They offered me good money, too. I refused them all. They called me a drunken fool, but I have never touched drink since that night."

"My poor Sey!" murmured Alice, stroking his grizzled hair.

"Sometimes I was hungry," he went on. "Twice I have been starving—and cold, oh, so cold! And now I have found you at last. Oh, Alice, can you forgive me? I have sinned against you. I have suffered for you. Tell me, dear, that you pardon me, and I will go forth again, but not to sing in the streets. My pilgrimage is over. I will start afresh. I have the addresses of two or three of those men I spoke of. I will go to them and say: 'I am Seymour Crewe. Give me my chance and leave the rest to me!'"

She laid her hand tenderly on his.

"Forgive you, Sey? I did that long ago."

He breathed a sigh of relief. His burden was lifted.

"I have not done so badly," she went on. "As you know, I have a good knowledge of music, and I have won a good connection even in this short time. I have put by some money——"

He rose from his chair.

"No," he said doggedly, "not that. I meant what I said. I, too, have put by a little. Ah, you look surprised; but it was part of my penance. I taxed myself one-fourth of all I received to go towards decent clothing when the time came for me to make my start afresh. You shall see that my reform is complete."

He smiled for the first time, and it cut her to the heart to see the sadness of that smile.

"When I have won my right place, then and then only will I ask you to take me back," said he.

"But you will not, you cannot, go away again to-night," she said anxiously.

"No," he replied slowly. "I will stay to-night."

"And to-morrow—Christmas Day—and, oh, Sey, there is Arty. I had been out to buy him some toys."

The lines on the worn face softened.

"Ah, yes, Arty! I had almost feared to ask. Is he well?"

"Yes, quite; and, oh, such a big boy! He is sleeping. Come and see him."

She led him upstairs to the little room where the child lay, and together they stood beside the cot.

Seymour Crewe bent and lightly touched the sleeping baby's brow with his lips.

"Listen!" said Alice, her eyes glistening. "Christmas bells, Sey. They ring joy for you and me, dear."

He took her in his arms.

"The deepest joy," said he. "That born of vanished sorrow, and, please God, they shall never ring aught else for you, if Seymour Crewe can help it."

They stood there whilst the bells rang on a while, and after one universal crash of welcome to Christmas ceased. Then Seymour Crewe and his wife knelt beside their baby's cot in heartfelt thanksgiving for the happiness that once again was theirs.

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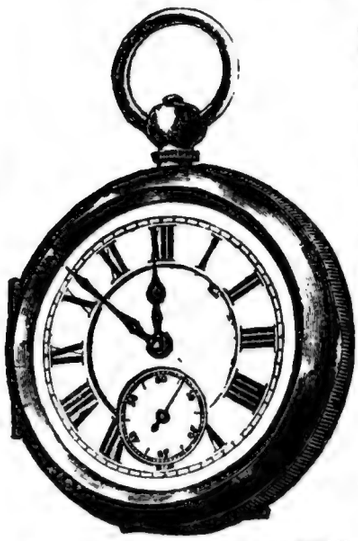

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The coupon may be copied, and the order given on a sheet of plain paper, but you must please mention *Pearson's Weekly.*

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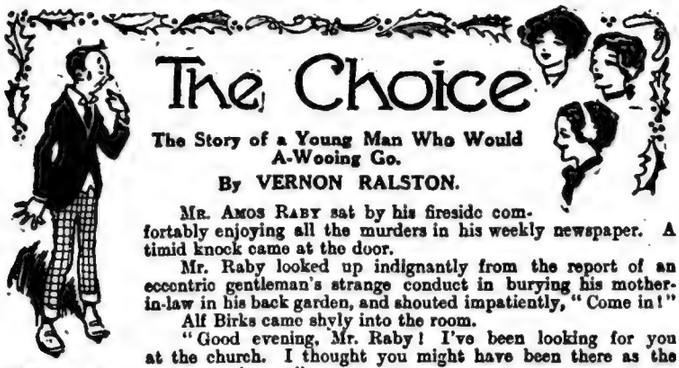

The Choice

The Story of a Young Man Who Would A-Wooing Go.

By VERNON RALSTON.

MR. AMOS RABY sat by his fireside comfortably enjoying all the murders in his weekly newspaper. A timid knock came at the door.

Mr. Raby looked up indignantly from the report of an eccentric gentleman's strange conduct in burying his mother-in-law in his back garden, and shouted impatiently, "Come in!"

Alf Birks came shyly into the room.

"Good evening, Mr. Raby! I've been looking for you at the church. I thought you might have been there as the Christmas decorating was going on."

"You'll never find me there when there's decoratin' goin' on. All them young wimmen 'oo wants kissing in corners don't want me to see 'em. When a man's a church official like me, Alf, 'is first duty is to be discreet. I'm not goin' to 'ang about there in the cold for no man. Now what do you want with me?"

"You know a good deal about marrying, Mr. Raby?"

"There's not a man in England knows more. I've given a send off to every couple from the parish church this forty year. Why, the vicar—he don't know nothing about marryin' along of me. He ain't been in the business twenty year."

"That's why I want to ask you something—you being such a wonderful experienced man, Mr. Raby."

"You may well say that. I've seen a bridegroom nigh fainting because he thought 'is bride warn't going to turn up, and I've seen 'er chasing 'im down their garden with a frying pan before the year was out. Aye, matrimony's a open book to me. Now, are you thinking of getting married, Alf?"

"Well, it's this way, Mr. Raby. I wants to marry one of the three Bulwell girls, and I can't rightly make up my mind which."

"The law ought to be altered," said Mr. Raby solemnly. "There ain't enough men to go round in this village. Now if you could only marry all three of 'em—separate weddings o' course, and me to be paid every time—it'd make you 'appy, and them 'appy, and me 'appy. There's a lot to be said for this Mormonism as long as people don't marry a batch at once and do me out o' my fee. Now if I'd a bit o' baccy I'd think over your trouble for you."

"I took the liberty o' bringing you a few cigars as it's nigh Christmas," said the youth.

Mr. Raby took the envelope, lit a cigar with difficulty, and puffed luxuriously.

"Well, which o' these Bulwell girls does you like cuddling best?" he asked.

Alf Birks came shyly into the room.

Alf Birks scratched his head. "Well, you see, it's this way, Mr. Raby, when I'm cuddling one of 'em I'm always a-wishing I was cuddling one of the other two."

"Then which of 'em's the best-tempered?"

"Well, that'll be Mary, but she's the worst-looking."

"Which of 'em's the best cook?"

"That's Jane, but she's not as good-tempered as Mary nor as good-looking as Mabel."

"Suppose you was on a desert island, which one 'd you like to 'ave with you?"

"I know you'll think it dreadfully weak of me, Mr. Raby, but I'd want the one I 'adn't got with me."

"You're a born Turk, that's what you are, Alf. That's your trouble. Just let me think it over for a minute. Ah, I s'pose you'll be at the parish Christmas Eve party in the schoolroom to-morrow night?"

"Yes, I've promised the girls I'm going with them."

"I'll settle it for you there, Alf. I'll show you just the one of 'em you really want. I've got a plan. Now you go away and leave me, and if you be so minded as to bring me some more cigars for the New Year I'll not be refusing them."

The schoolroom the next evening was a scene of unusual splendour. Eighteen pennyworth of crinkled paper hung on the walls. Pink and green wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Bright New Year faced one everywhere. Two plant pots and three occasional tables had been brought from the Vicarage to make the place seem homelike. In one corner there were piles of oranges and bags of nuts for the juniors. In another, heaps of fat ham sandwiches and coffee urns for the seniors. Holly was stuck everywhere, there was a profusion of evergreens, but the curate had said that they must draw the line at mistletoe on ecclesiastical premises.

One of the first arrivals was Mr. Alfred Birks, escorting the three Misses Bulwell.

The vicar and the curate stood at the door to welcome the guests. Mr. Raby mounted guard over the nuts and oranges to prevent raids by savage juveniles, and soon the guests began to appear.

One of the first arrivals was Mr. Alf Birks escorting the three Misses Bulwell.

"Ah, Birks," said the vicar cheerily, "glad to see you escorting a lady. A promising sign."

The vicar had glanced smilingly at Mary Bulwell who headed the party.

"Begging your pardon, sir," interrupted Mr. Birks, "but I was bringing *all* three of them."

The four went away and seated themselves in a secluded corner under a flaring motto, "What is home without a mother."

Other parties came in gradually. All seated themselves as far as possible away from anybody else. All became stiff and unnatural as if they had been starched on entering the room. The juniors congregated in the vicinity of Mr. Raby, who stood ready to make an example of the first child who rushed for an orange.

"A carol!" cried the vicar. "We'll start with a carol to awaken the proper Christmas spirit."

The children, with reluctant eyes on the nuts, were forced into singing "God rest ye, merry gentlemen."

"Now, now," whispered the vicar to the curate, "we must galvanise them into life somehow. Suppose you do a few conjuring tricks to remove the stiffness." The curate did divers tricks with a penny in which the audience took a sleepy interest. It was not till he began to juggle with an egg and dropped the egg on his trousers that there was the least approach to enthusiasm.

"Encore!" shouted two or three daring spirits as the curate rushed out of the room to change his apparel.

The vicar stepped nobly into the gap, gave a little speech on the jollity of Christmas, and distributed nuts to the youngsters. Then the deadly silence was broken for there was a vast cracking of nuts, and a hail of shells flew from one side of the room to the other.

It was not till the curate dropped the egg that there was the least sign of excitement.

But there was no stirring the adults. The vicar strove to get up games, but the villagers sat in a state of social paralysis. Even when the curate returned and asked for volunteers for "shy widow," there was no response. It was at that moment that Mr. Raby saw Alf Birks seated by his three flames and remembered the experiment he proposed to make. He slid quietly into the passage and, reaching for a tap, turned off the gas.

There was a general exclamation of surprise. Then came a laugh in one corner of the room, a loud smack as if of a kiss, and a louder smack as if some daring swain had received a fair hand across his face. A scuffling began in the corner where the hobbledehoys and maidens sat, and the juniors made one wild rush for the oranges.

"Raby, Raby!" cried the vicar. "Get lights at once. Who's got matches?"

"Right, sir!" came the voice of Mr. Raby. "It's been turned off at the main, sir. If I catch the young rascal!"

The next moment the gas was turned on again. The air of stiffness seemed to have vanished from the assembly. Mr. Raby noticed with satisfaction that the curate had taken Alf aside and was having a heated conversation with him.

"Caught him a-kissing," thought Mr. Raby.

But the little dark interlude had been the making of the party. Instantly the games began to go. No more had the vicar and the curate to beg for volunteers. The fun soon became fast and furious. How long it would have lasted no one can say if Mr. Raby, who thought it was quite time he should lock up the schoolroom and get round to the Bull before closing-time, had not whispered to the vicar:

"You'll excuse me mentionin' it, sir, but two or three o' the parents expressed a 'ope it'd not be kept on late, else they've such worry gettin' their families to church on Christmas morning."

"Quite right, Raby, quite right. I commend you for reminding me. Now, my friends, we'll finish the evening with 'Good King Wenceslas.'"

As the guests moved away Mr. Raby whispered to Alf Birks, "You give them girls the slip as soon as you can and come round to the Bull."

Alf Birks nodded knowingly as he collected the girls' cloaks.

Mr. Raby locked up the schoolroom and hurried to the Bull.

"Been to the party, Mr. Raby?" inquired the landlord.

"Aye, I've been doin' a bit of what I call philosophising. Young Alf Birks couldn't make up 'is mind which o' them Bulwell girls he really wanted to marry, so I've been settling it for 'im. Gimme a pint."

"And how did you manage that?"

"Well, between you an' me an' the bedpost I see 'im sittin' on a chair opposite 'em all so I turns the gas off for a minute or two and gives him a chance. The one he rushed to kiss directly the gas was off is the one he wants. You see I've let 'uman nature decide it for 'im."

"Suppose he never kissed none o' them," said the landlord.

"Well, he ain't fit to be married."

Just then Alf Birks hurried in at the door.

"I've settled it for you," cried Mr. Raby.

"You're lucky, young man, to 'ave 'ad a mind like that a-working for you," declared the landlord.

"I knows just which you want, Alf. Now when I turns the gas off at the party, which of them did you kiss?"

Mr. Birks hesitated somewhat.

"He's been a sport and kissed the lot!" cried the landlord.

"I didn't," replied Alf Birks.

"Alfred," said Mr. Raby solemnly, "tell me 'oo you kissed. We're all friends 'ere. Don't you be shy. I 'eard a distinc' smack over your way. Now the one you jumped to kiss in the dark is the one you wants in your 'eart."

"Well, I kissed, I kissed——" hesitated the youth.

"Out with it, young feller!" said the impatient landlord.

"You see it was pitch dark," said Alf Birks feebly.

"You know 'oo you kissed. Your 'eart 'd guided you," said Mr. Raby.

"Well, there seemed a bit o' moving going on, and it was a minute before I could make up my mind. And then I makes a grab and I kissed——"

"Which?" cried Mr. Raby, slamming the counter impatiently.

"I kissed the curate!"

"I kissed the curate," said Alf.

This week's number of HOME NOTES Offers free patterns of babies' coats.

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KEPHALDOL

Word-making

COMPETITION

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Competition Closes December 15th. All Prizes Paid January 3rd.

Everyone can compete in this pleasant and instructive Competition, and ***everyone has an equal chance*** of winning a big cash prize. No special literary ability or anything of that sort required. All you have to do is to write down all the words you can make from the twelve letters contained in the two words "Try Kephaldol." You simply have to make as many words as you can. Only ordinary English words to be found in English Dictionaries to be used, for example—The—Hold—Doll—Hat—Trophy. Proper names—*i.e.*, names of persons and places—not allowed.

RULES AND CONDITIONS OF COMPETITION

1. The Prizes will be awarded to the competitors sending in the longest lists of correct words.
2. With each list must be sent the outer carton (cardboard case) which has contained a tube of Dr. Stohr's KEPHALDOL, THE GREAT PAIN KILLER, as sold by all chemists. (Sample cartons will not be accepted.)
3. No letter to be used oftener in any one word than it appears in the words "Try Kephaldol"—thus the letter Y must not be used more than once in a word, whilst the letter L can be used twice in any word, but not oftener.
4. All lists must be clearly written and plainly state total number of words and competitor's name and address.
5. No one either directly or indirectly employed by or connected with Kephaldol will be allowed to compete.
6. In case of a tie for any one prize, the amount will be divided equally. No person will be allowed to take more than one prize.
7. All lists must be sent (envelopes marked "Competition") to Kephaldol Ltd., Kephaldol House, Norwich Street, London, E.C., and be received not later than noon December 15th, 1913, when Competition closes.
8. The Prizes will be awarded by a Committee of three well-known business men (in no way connected with Kephaldol), whose names will be published, with list of winners, in the *Daily Mail* and *Daily Sketch* on January 3rd.
9. The decision of the Committee on all matters concerning the Competition must be accepted as final and legally binding in all respects, and acceptance of this rule is an express condition of entry.

No correspondence will be entered into in connection with this Competition.

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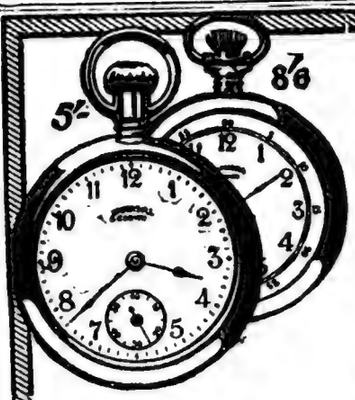

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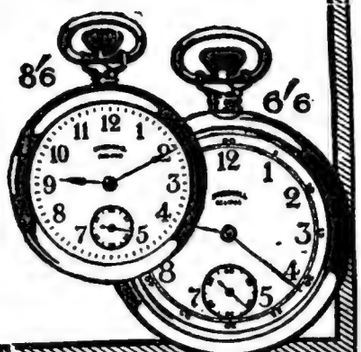

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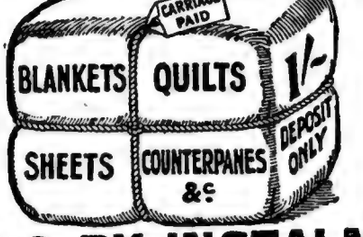

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DAINTY CHRISTMAS RECIPES.

Royal Icing.

Mix two pounds of icing sugar with the whites of four eggs and the strained juice of half a lemon. Mix with a wooden spoon, and spread over the cakes with a knife dipped in hot water.

Icing for the Xmas Cake.

Mix one pound of caster sugar with three-quarters of a pound of ground almonds, break in two or three eggs, according to size, and add two teaspoonfuls of rum. Mix into a firm paste, dust with sugar, and roll out to size of cake. Place on top and press down firmly.

Stuffing for the Turkey.

Chop half a pound each of lean and fat pork finely, mix them with four ounces of breadcrumbs, and a large teaspoonful of minced sage, a blade of powdered mace, and salt and pepper to taste. Mix all together with an egg, and stuff the turkey. A flavouring of lemon-peel may be added, and pork sausages used instead of the pork.

Hard Sauce (This sauce is now the fashion for serving with the Xmas pudding).

Take a quarter of a pound of butter and whip it to a cream, adding gradually six ounces of caster sugar. Beat till very light and frothy, then add, one at a time, the whites of two eggs, and beat until all is like whipped cream. Then place on one side in a cold place to harden, when it will be ready to serve with the pudding.

Mincemeat with Beef.

Take one pound of suet, a teaspoonful of salt, a quarter of an ounce of mixed spices, one nutmeg grated, one pound of raisins, one pound of sultanas, one pound and a half of currants, one pound of apples, three-quarters of a pound of rump steak, half a pound of mixed peel, a quarter of a pint of brandy, and half a pint of Madeira wine, half a pound of sugar, and the juice of four lemons. Chop the suet, wash the currants and sultanas, peel, core and chop the apples with all the other ingredients, except the currants and the wine and brandy. Then mix all together, place in jars and tie down with grease-proof paper, which must be made quite air-tight.

The Xmas Cake.

Cream together one pound of butter with one pound of caster sugar, beat four eggs and add them with half a pint of milk, put in one pound of raisins, one pound of currants, and one pound of sultanas washed, dried, picked, and stoned, and one pound of figs quartered. Add a quarter of a pound of almonds, blanched and chopped, and a quarter of a pound of mixed peel finely chopped, half a nutmeg grated, and a small teaspoonful of mixed spices. Dredge in one pound of flour, previously mixed with two teaspoonfuls of baking powder. Pour into well papered and buttered tins, and bake for two hours and a half. These quantities make two large cakes.

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THE hat-pin problem has been solved.

If a man wants his hair cut he has only to walk into the nearest barber's. If a woman wants a hat-pin-cut she can now get it at the nearest big shop or stores.

It is done by an ingenious little machine that makes the hat-pin peril a thing of the past by snipping off the end of the pin. The pin is inserted in the machine. One turn of the handle cuts off the superfluous piece, another sharpens the new end, while a third turn puts on a fresh polish.

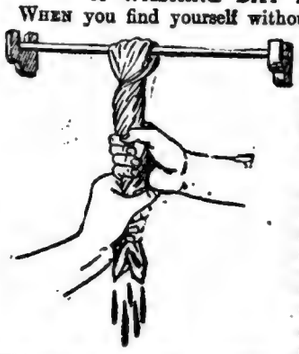
Most of the big London shops have this machine in use, both for stray customers worried about protruding pins and for customers who have just bought a hat and want pins to suit. The pin is chosen, the hat measured, and the selected pin cut to fit the hat.

A famous milliner recently declared that the hat-pin fiend would soon disappear if she realised that the long hat-pin gave her away to everyone as being behind the times, as it plainly shows that the wearer has bought no new pins since before the present fashion of small hats set in. Long hat-pins are relics of last year or the year before, when the large hat reigned.

1. The beef suet should be finely chopped or passed through a mincer.
2. Dried and sifted.
3. Bake in the oven to a golden brown.
4. These should be chopped and baked to a golden brown.
5. Finely shred the candied orange and lemon peel.
6. The rind of the two fresh lemons must be finely chopped and passed through a mincer.
7. Raisins must be stoned and the currants carefully washed.
8. Finely chop the dates and figs.
9. The prunes must be stewed for one and a half hours in one and a half pints of water, with a few sprigs of bruised cinnamon. Strain liquor and remove stones.
10. Beat and mix the eight eggs with the liquor from the stewed prunes while the latter is still warm.
11 and 12. Mix the brandy and whiskey and stout together, and pour on the other ingredients half a pint at a time, mixing well together with a wooden spoon till the desired standard of thickness is reached. Boil or steam the pudding for twelve to fourteen hours.

A WASHING DAY HINT.

WHEN you find yourself without a wringer on washing days, adopt the idea illustrated in the accompanying picture; you will find it an excellent substitute.



Fix two brackets over the sink and place a rod on them similar to those used for roller towels. You then place the clothes over the rod, and wring. This, you will find, answers the purpose quite as well.

CHRISTMASSY HOME HINTS.

When Making Horseradish Sauce for Beef,

Use condensed milk with the vinegar. It makes a most piquant blend.

When Making the Xmas Cake,

Pass the candied peel through the mincing machine. The flavour of the cake will be greatly improved.

When Chopping Suet for the Xmas Pudding

Or mincemeat, sprinkle the knife with a little ground rice. This will prevent it from sticking to the blade.

When Serving the Pudding,

Pour a little brandy round it. This should first be heated in a spoon till it lights, and then be poured into the dish.

When Cooking a Duck,

Mix a little salt and pepper together on a plate and rub the inside and outside of the duck with it. This makes the skin crisp.

When Making Mincemeat,

Put all the ingredients through the mincing machine. This makes the mincemeat much darker, and gives a better flavour.

When Hanging Chinese Lanterns

For Xmas decorations, place a little sand at the bottom of each. This prevents them from turning over and catching fire.

Are You Fond of Babies?

If so, you simply must read the Special Baby articles in this week's number of HOME NOTES. There is one in particular you will enjoy, "He is Our Child," the first of a capital series. Buy a copy to-day.

How to Roast the Turkey.

Dress and Stuff

The bird, then fasten a sheet of buttered paper over the breast.

About Fifteen Minutes

Before serving, remove the paper and dredge the turkey lightly with flour. Put a piece of butter into the basting ladle, and, as the butter melts, baste the bird with it.

How to Choose a Turkey.

Norfolk

Turkeys are generally considered the best.

Choose

One with smooth black legs and wattles of a bright red.

Avoid

Those with long hairs and flesh of a violet tint.

To Cook a Turkey

Weighing ten pounds requires about two hours.

A Cock

Turkey should be chosen for roasting and a hen for boiling.

REVEALS COMPLEXION SECRET OF THE SPANISH.

LADY TELLS HOW THEY KEEP THEIR YOUTHFUL COMPLEXIONS, EVEN AT SIXTY.

"As a young girl," writes one of our readers "I always had a nice clear and delicately-tinted complexion, but on reaching the age of thirty it changed completely. The chilly winter winds and rain made my skin rough and dry—my face used to burn and smart horribly after the slightest exposure to frost or cold. I felt very worried to see the dreadful change that was taking place. About this time I went for a trip abroad, and while travelling in the south of Spain, became intimate with an elderly Spanish lady. Knowing how proud the Spanish girls are of their lovely skin, and hoping she could help me, I told her of my trouble. She advised me to obtain two ounces of rose water, one dram tincture of benzoin, and two ounces of ordinary flowers of oxzoin from the chemist, which, she said, I could mix myself, and after shaking well, apply it with a soft cloth or sponge. She stated that her family had used this lotion for years, and vowed it would quickly restore my complexion. I applied the lotion as she told me, and the result was surprising. In two days I saw a great difference. The skin was losing its roughness, the dry, tight feeling was easier, and the burning ceased altogether. After four days' use the change was wonderful. My skin had regained its smoothness, the pores were no longer coarse, and my complexion had grown younger before my very eyes. Regular use of this splendid recipe has kept my complexion beautiful for thirty years. It is inexpensive, delightful to use, and so effective that it cannot fail to please anyone who tries it."

£20 ORIGINALLY INVESTED IN OIL NOW WORTH £8,000

COAL SHARES leap from 5d. to £77.

An Exceptional Opportunity to Acquire Shares in a Sound Enterprise with Every Prospect of Handsome Dividends and Substantial Advance in Values.

OIL.

The following table (taken from Stock Exchange Records, where securities are listed) shows what a few shrewd investors made by taking advantage of the early offering in the California field.

£20 originally invested in Pinal Oil Company is now worth £2,400 0s. 0d.
£20 originally invested in Lucile Oil Company is now worth £3,000 0s. 0d.
£20 originally invested in Home Oil Company is now worth £8,000 0s. 0d.

In California a 40-acre tract in the proven oil district is worth up to £100,000.

The Nakamun Company, of whom further details are given below, has control of 60 such 40-acre tracts.

COAL.

Again, shares in the Crows Nest Pass Coal Co., of British Columbia, were offered a few years ago at fivepence each, and were sold recently at £77 each.

The Nakamun Company control 960 acres of Coal lands on which two seams, each 6 feet thick, have been proven.

ASPHALT.

Asphalt, or Tar Sand, is a product for which there is a crying need all over the world. But especially in the swift-growing new cities of Western Canada. At present Asphalt has to be imported from Trinidad, or from far California. Freightage is ruinous. Edmonton itself, one of Western Canada's largest and fastest growing cities, wants at this moment 500,000 square yards of asphalt paving. At present every ounce has to be imported.

Every other large Canadian city is in a similar plight. Asphalt is THE material for paving. Nothing approaches it in any of the qualities demanded for a good, smooth, durable paving. The whole world is a market for this product.

A RICH DISCOVERY!

And now—at the very moment when the need of it is most keenly felt—when the demand is at its height—comes the great discovery! An exceptionally rich mine of asphalt has been discovered at the very door of Edmonton herself, 38 miles from the city boundaries!

The Nakamun Company controls 2,400 acres of land in the Athabasca Valley, the whole of which is believed to be underlaid with an immense thickness of Asphalt.

THE NAKAMUN ASPHALT & OIL Co. Ltd.

The Company is incorporated under the laws of Alberta, Canada. The holding of shares involves the Shareholders in no further liability. The authorised capital of the Nakamun Asphalt and Oil Company Limited is 1,200,000 dollars (say £240,000) divided into 1,200,000 dollar (say 4s. 2d.) Shares.

There are no Debentures or Preference Shares; the whole profits of the undertaking will be available for division among the holders of these Ordinary Shares.

OIL FUEL FOR THE NAVY.

Ottawa, July 25.—If the Dominion of Canada is to contribute towards the supply of the oil fuel for the British Admiralty in furtherance of its scheme for operating warships by that method, the tar-sands of the Athabasca river will be the principal source, in the opinion of James White, deputy head of the Conservation Committee.

"If the tar-sands of the Athabasca mean anything," said Mr. White to-day, "it is that below them are immense quantities of petroleum."—Extract from "Edmonton Daily Bulletin," July 26th, 1913.

Mr. Douglas, Acting-Mayor of Edmonton, in October, 1912, publicly laid down a portion of the roadway at the corner of Jasper and Namayo Avenues, Edmonton, with asphalt supplied from the mine of the Nakamun Asphalt and Oil Company Ltd. After nine months' hard wear the material has proved in the very best possible manner how admirably adapted it is for the purpose of paving public thoroughfares.

Mr. A. J. Lattornell, City Engineer of Edmonton, writes, on June 27th, 1913, to the Nakamun Asphalt and Oil Co. Ltd.: "The Nakamun Asphalt laid on the corner of Namayo and Jasper Avenues is at the present time in satisfactory condition."

THE ASPHALT.

"THE GREATEST ASPHALT DEPOSITS THE WORLD HAS EVER KNOWN."

Statement by Mr. J. H. Russell, of Edmonton. The Asphalt of the Nakamun Asphalt and Oil Company Ltd. is situate 38 miles from the City of Edmonton, covers an area of 2,400 acres, at a depth below the surface of only 3 to 26 feet, and is of an estimated thickness of 150 feet.

The Company has control over 2,400 acres of Asphalt and Oil land in township 56, range 2, west of the 5th meridian, 38 miles north-west of Edmonton and 11 miles from the Canadian Northern Railway. On this property the Company has found Asphalt. This Asphalt, being a residue of Oil, is forced up from the great Oil basin beneath by the action of the earth in the form of gas, and settles in the sandstone-cap, thus creating an article of very great commercial value.

STRUCK OIL!!!

A cable has just been received (Oct.14th), from the Nakamun Asphalt and Oil Company Limited, of Edmonton, which proves the existence of oil in Alberta, Western Canada:—

Cablegram reads:—

"Oil has been struck at Calgary in commercial quantities. Intense excitement. We are right in line.

"Signed, S. WESTCOTT,
"Nakamun Asphalt & Oil Co. Ltd."

Extract from "The Times," Wednesday, Oct. 15th, 1913:—

OIL DISCOVERED IN WESTERN CANADA, WINNIPEG, Oct. 13.

According to reliable information from Calgary, success has crowned the efforts of the oil prospectors who for eight months have been boring at a spot 60 miles south of Calgary. A copious flow of excellent oil was found at 2,000 feet. This should prove an immense boon to the West, as it solves the question of the supply of crude oils, gasolene, and lubricants, which in the past have been very expensive in the West owing to high freight rates.—Reuter.

LOCAL FAITH.

There are 500 Canadian Shareholders in the Nakamun Asphalt and Oil Company Limited, 90 per cent. of whom are Edmonton people or local business folk who reside within a few miles of the city and the property. This fact alone should provide the British investor with the strongest possible of all guarantees. For these Edmonton People KNOW what they are putting their money into! Complete list of these local shareholders, with names and addresses, sent on post card request.

Guiding the Sinking of the 18-in. oil pipe at Nakamun.

WHAT YOU BUY WHEN YOU PURCHASE THESE SHARES.

(1) An interest in what may prove the greatest Oil and Gas field on the North American Continent.
(2) An interest in an Asphalt deposit estimated to be of sufficient extent to pave every town and city in Canada.
(3) An interest in a Coalfield 960 acres in extent, and of assured commercial value.

Oil, Asphalt, and Coal form a combination of enormous possibilities, and reports of experts who have examined the Nakamun Asphalt and Oil Company's property reveal conditions indicating that it is sufficiently rich IN TWO OF THESE RESOURCES to ensure the payment of handsome dividends as soon as transportation facilities are available.

The lowest number of shares that may be applied for is 10 (ten). The following shows at a glance the cost of various numbers of shares:—

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
10 Shares cost ...	2	3	4	100 Shares cost ...	21	13	4
15 " " ...	3	5	0	250 " " ...	54	3	4
25 " " ...	5	8	4	500 " " ...	103	6	9
50 " " ...	10	16	8	1,000 " " ...	216	13	4
75 " " ...	16	5	0	5,000 " " ...	1,083	6	8

THE COAL.

The Company's 960 acres of Coal Lands immediately adjoin the Canadian Northern Railway line, Peace River branch, and can be mined by tunnel operations, and loaded directly into the railway trucks from the mine, thus obviating the immense cost of shaft sinking.

TWO 6-FT. SEAMS OVER 960 ACRES.

The property has been tested by diamond drill, proving the existence of semi-bituminous coal in two seams of six feet each at a depth of 55 ft. As the brow of the hill is 90 feet above the railway, the coal can be loaded directly into the railway trucks from the mine, thus ensuring an enormous saving in the cost of handling.

No costly shaft sinking, no spur railway tracks, no waggon haulage. The sectional map reproduced on this page shows clearly how simply the mine will be worked.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS ANNOUNCEMENT.

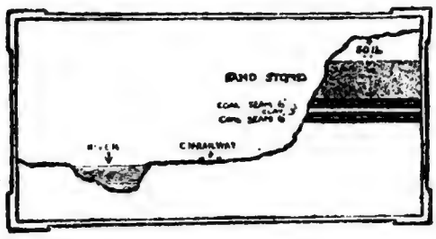
The Canadian Industrial Development Co., Albany Buildings, 47 Victoria Street, London, S.W., now offer 50,000 Treasury shares in the Nakamun Asphalt and Oil Company Limited, at 4/4 each.

50,000 SHARES AT 4/4 EACH.

These shares are all fully paid, and non-assessable—*i.e.*, they are liable to no further calls or responsibility whatever. Their par value is one dollar (4/2).

ONLY THE PROMPT CAN SECURE THE SHARES.

This is one of the rarest opportunities ever held out to the small investor. The application for shares is certain to be large and immediate. Those, therefore, wishing to save risky delays, and to make sure of an interest in one of the most promising undertakings, may fill in, sign, and post the coupon below with the correct remittance.



INTERESTING FREE LITERATURE.

Maps, plans, diagrams, and the fullest descriptions of the property, and the undertaking—necessarily restricted in this announcement—will be sent quite free, post free and obligation free, to all who send a postcard to

CANADIAN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CO.,
Albany Buildings, 47 Victoria Street, London, S.W.

REPORT BY A SELECT COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE OF CANADA.

"The evidence submitted to your Committee points to the existence in the Athabasca and Mackenzie Valleys (north of Edmonton) of the most extensive petroleum field in America, if not in the world."

Write Your Name and Address Plainly.

FORM OF APPLICATION TO PURCHASE SHARES.

Referring to the offer made by CANADIAN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CO. to sell shares in the **NAKAMUN ASPHALT AND OIL COMPANY Limited**, I hereby offer to purchase from the said CANADIAN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CO..... of the said Shares, or any smaller number of the said Shares which they may be willing to sell to me, at the price of Four Shillings and Four Pence per Share, and I enclose by way of deposit £.....being the amount of the full purchase price of the shares applied for by me. This offer is made on the understanding that the Share Certificate of any of the said Shares sold to me shall be delivered to me within 60 days from the date hereof, and that if this offer is not accepted, the amount sent herewith is to be returned to me without deduction, and if this offer is accepted for any smaller number of Shares than that applied for by me, the balance of the said amount, after deducting the purchase price of the Shares sold to me, shall be returned to me without deduction.

Name (in full).....

Address (in full).....

.....

Profession or Business.....

(A Lady should state whether she is Spinster, Wife, or Widow.)

.....1913. (P.W.)

This form when duly filled up should be sent entire with the necessary remittance to Canadian Industrial Development Co., Albany Buildings, 47 Victoria Street, London, S.W.

The applicant is particularly requested to write clearly within the space above his or her name and the full address to which the receipt should be sent.

All the statements of fact appearing in the above advertisement are quoted from the official publications of the Nakamun Asphalt & Oil Co. Ltd.

The World's Best Stories

In the Family.

LORD SANDWICH, whose claims as a faith-healer are being discussed rather warmly in certain quarters, once had an uncomfortable experience in the United States on account of his curious name.

While he was travelling through the States he attended a ball at Washington, and asked to be introduced to a certain young lady.

The introducer agreed, and led him up to the lady. "May I introduce Lord Sandwich?" he observed.

The young lady evidently thought it was a made-up name, and they were making fun of her, for she retorted promptly:—

"My! And is Lord Sponge-cake coming later?"

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IT was, of course, one of Lord Sandwich's ancestors who invented the combination of bread and meat that has been called a sandwich ever since.

Of this same ancestor the story is told that he went to Paris to learn dancing, but as his lordship had an awkward, shambling gait, his attempts at dancing were not very successful.

The dancing-master had been very civil, however, and the Earl, as he was taking his leave, offered to do what he could for him in London.

"Then," said the man, bowing profoundly, "I should esteem it a particular favour if your lordship would never tell anyone who taught you to dance!"

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"No, I've a much better and less obvious plan than that," retorted the detective. "You wait."

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"Yes," said the witness.

"Have you a good memory for faces?" was the next question.

"Yes," said the witness.

"Ah," commented counsel. "Now, I want to know if you can see anybody in this court who was in your shop last night talking to you?"

The witness, rather surprised, looked all round the court, and at length admitted that he could not recognise anybody.

"Good," said Sir John. "Now, have you ever seen me before?"

"Never," said the witness positively.

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"And what about drinks?" asked one.

"Well," said the other, "if I lose, you shall have a glass of beer with each fish."

"Right-o!" was the reply. "*Then we'll have whitebait!*"

Country Life is Country Life

"COUNTRY LIFE" with Cigarettes

(MEDIUM STRENGTH)

Manufactured from Pure — Virginia Tobacco. —

10 for 2½d. 50 for 1/-

JOHN PLAYER & SONS, Nottingham.

Branch of the Imperial Tobacco Co. (of Gt. Britain and Ireland), Ltd.

MADE IN ENGLAND.

GLOBE METAL POLISH.

In Paste & Liquid.

The British Polish for British Weather.

Doesn't the damp air of the British climate just play havoc with the bright brasses? Polished one day, dull the next and must be polished again if they are not to be unsightly. That is if you use ordinary metal polish.

But not if you use Globe! Not only does Globe give the brightest shine, but the shine withstands the tarnishing effect of the atmosphere in a remarkable way.

You will find that your brasses, etc., will not need polishing half so often when you use Globe. And there is no hard rubbing with Globe.

Use Globe and you'll save hours of polishing.

GLOBE PRIZE COMPETITION.

Thousands of valuable prizes are given to users of Globe. Ask your dealer, or send post-card to Raimes & Co. Ltd., Bow, London, E., for full prize list and particulars.

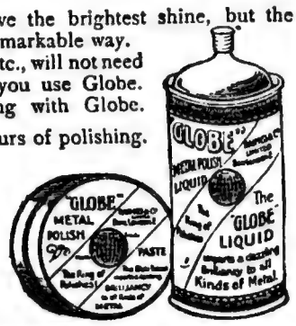
Globe the British Metal Polish—is made in two forms, paste and liquid, identical in their polishing properties.

Paste: 1d. 2d. 4d. and larger tins.

Liquid: (in sprinkler-top cans, which prevent waste) 2d. 6d. 1/- and larger sizes.

Of Grocers & Stores everywhere.

RAIMES & CO. LTD., BOW, LONDON, E.



"I'm just a Sunlight Girl

employed in the wrapping and packing of Sunlight Soap, and no one has more right to speak for its purity than I, unless it be the expert chemists who test each boiling of soap. They, of course, tell scientifically, but I know nothing of fatty acids and formulæ.

SUNLIGHT SOAP

I do know, however, what goes on around me. I do know how careful every workman is who tends the Sunlight Soap boiling pans. I do know how clean and sweet every part of the Sunlight Soap works is.

I do know that nothing is spared to make Sunlight Soap the purest and best soap in the world—and I do know that everything is done to make a Sunlight Girl's life as happy as possible. You can take my word for Sunlight Soap's efficiency."

A Sketch showing the Sunlight Girls' Rest Room.

The name LEVER on Soap is a Guarantee of Purity and Excellence.

LEVER BROTHERS LIMITED, PORT SUNLIGHT.

B 197—18

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"Well," said the other, "if I lose, you shall have a glass of beer with each fish."

"Right-o!" was the reply. "*Then we'll have whitebait!*"

Country Life *is* Country Life

"COUNTRY LIFE" *with* Cigarettes

(MEDIUM STRENGTH)

Manufactured from Pure — Virginia Tobacco. —

10 for 2½d. 50 for 1/-

JOHN PLAYER & SONS, Nottingham.

Branch of the Imperial Tobacco Co. (of Gt. Britain and Ireland), Ltd.

MADE IN ENGLAND.

GLOBE METAL POLISH.

In Paste & Liquid.

The British Polish for British Weather.

Doesn't the damp air of the British climate just play havoc with the bright brasses? Polished one day, dull the next and must be polished again if they are not to be unsightly. That is if you use ordinary metal polish.

But not if you use Globe! Not only does Globe give the brightest shine, but the shine withstands the tarnishing effect of the atmosphere in a remarkable way.

You will find that your brasses, etc., will not need polishing half so often when you use Globe. And there is no hard rubbing with Globe.

Use Globe and you'll save hours of polishing.

GLOBE PRIZE COMPETITION.

Thousands of valuable prizes are given to users of Globe. Ask your dealer, or send post-card to Raimes & Co. Ltd., Bow, London, E., for full prize list and particulars.

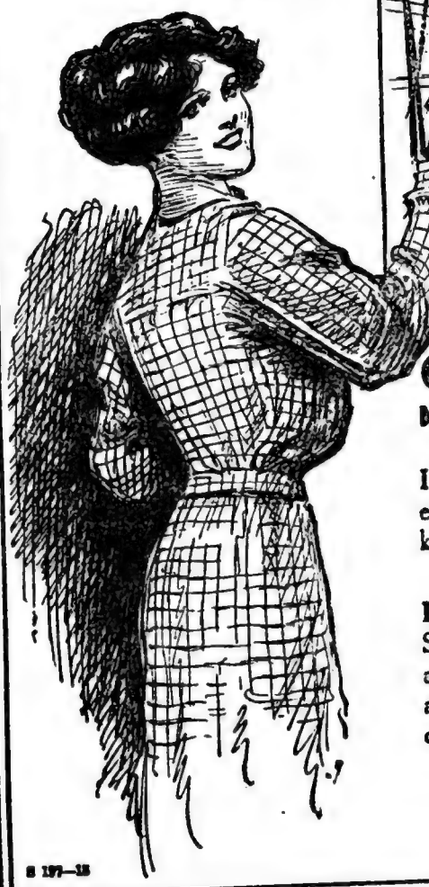
Globe—the British Metal Polish—is made in two forms, paste and liquid, identical in their polishing properties.

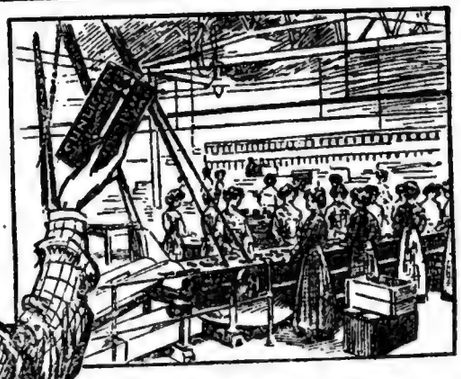
Paste: 1d. 2d. 4d. and larger tins.

Liquid: (in sprinkler-top cans, which prevent waste) 2d. 6d. 1/- and larger sizes.

Of Grocers & Stores everywhere.

RAIMES & CO. LTD., BOW, LONDON, E.





"I'm just a Sunlight Girl

employed in the wrapping and packing of Sunlight Soap, and no one has more right to speak for its purity than I, unless it be the expert chemists who test each boiling of soap. They, of course, tell scientifically, but I know nothing of fatty acids and formulæ.

SUNLIGHT SOAP

I do know, however, what goes on around me. I do know **how careful** every workman is who tends the Sunlight Soap boiling pans. I do know how **clean and sweet** every part of the Sunlight Soap works is.

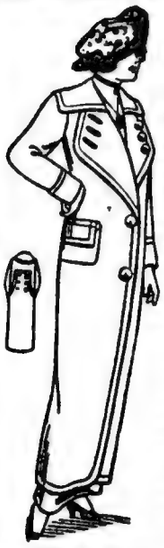
I do know that nothing is spared to make Sunlight Soap the purest and best soap in the world—and I do know that everything is done to make a Sunlight Girl's life as happy as possible. You can take my word for Sunlight Soap's efficiency."

The name LEVER on Soap is a Guarantee of Purity and Excellence.

LEVER BROTHERS LIMITED, PORT SUNLIGHT.

A Sketch showing the Sunlight Girls' Rest Room.

GRAVES DEPENDABLE VALUES AND CONVENIENT TERMS



CHARMING STYLES IN LADIES' COATS

Every Lady should secure our display of **New Model Coats and Paletots**, specially designed and made for present wear. All the most fashionable and graceful styles have been included, and many new and attractive features which are exclusive to our garments are fully described and illustrated in our list. All the favourite cloths in a great variety of popular shades tastefully cut and designed, and offered at prices from **18/-** to **55/-** on our well known convenient Terms of Easy Monthly Payments. You should send a Postcard at once for our catalogue and patterns We deliver any garment to approved orders on receipt of small payment with order, the balance being payable in small monthly payments if you are entirely satisfied with Fit, Quality, Style, and Finish, after full examination in your own home.

FROM 3/- MONTHLY

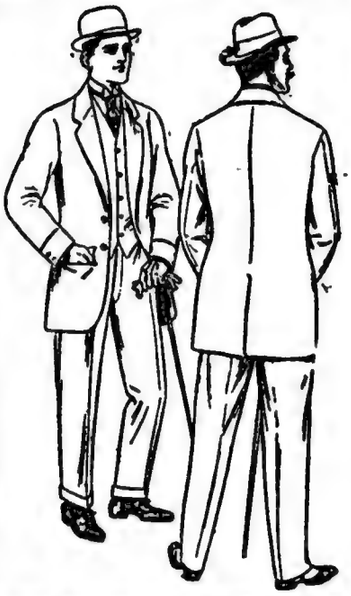
SEND FOR PATTERNS TO-DAY.

J. G. GRAVES. Ltd. SHEFFIELD.

GRAVES RELIABLE FOOTWEAR

Send a Post Card for our Handsomely Illustrated Album of High-Grade Footwear. This book contains photographs of an extensive selection of Boots and Shoes of undeniable quality, all made on hygienic principles and guaranteed to give satisfaction in Fit, Wear and appearance. **We Deliver** Footwear carriage paid to all approved orders on receipt of small payment now. Balance in monthly payments if satisfactory.

J. G. GRAVES LTD. SHEFFIELD.



THE GRAVES 42/- SUITS EXACTLY TO YOUR MEASURES

IT PAYS in every walk of life to be well dressed. A smart gentlemanly Suit puts heart into a man and gives him confidence in himself. It is mistaken economy to neglect your appearance for a well dressed man can command respect in business affairs, and win for himself the esteem and regard of his friends.

FOR 6/- NOW.

For a Payment of **6/-** now we deliver the Suit to approved orders, and if you are entirely satisfied with Fit, Style, Quality and Finish, the balance is payable in Monthly Payments of **6/-**. Money back if you are disappointed.

Write for Patterns. A Post Card will bring you per return the finest display of Cloth Samples ever submitted at the price, and these cuttings from the cloth lengths which we are now making up at **36/-** and **42/-** will enable you to judge of the excellence of the materials we are using, and the undoubted superiority of design which characterises our cloths and commands the approval of even the most fastidious customer. TWEEDS, CHEVIOTS, WORSTED SERGES, PLAIN BLACK AND BLUE VICUNAS, and a splendid line in hard wearing YORKSHIRE SUITINGS in various designs.

GRAVES SUITS are for men of all ages; if you have preferences and ideas of your own as to how you like your clothes making, simply tell us when sending our order and your wishes will have our careful attention.

Please state if Light or Dark Patterns are preferred.

J. G. GRAVES LTD. SHEFFIELD.

GRAVES MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS OF FINE QAULITY

Complete Violin Outfit, comprising Violin, Case, Bow, Resin, and an extra set of Strings.

Delivered carriage paid to approved orders for **2/-** with order, balance in equal monthly payments after full examination in your own home. **2/-** in £ Cash Discount

J. G. GRAVES Ltd SHEFFIELD.

Write for Catalogue Free. All Music Lovers should send to-day for our new Catalogue of Violins, Violin Outfits, Auto and Zither Harps, Mandolines, Banjos, Concertinas, Melodeons, Flutes, Piccolos, Clarionets, & all kinds of Brass Instruments, Pianos, Organs.

CHOICE FURS OF EXQUISITE BEAUTY AND FINISH

It is a mistake to assume that really good quality Furs are not obtainable except at ridiculously high prices. As a matter of fact, **The Graves Display** of Genuine High-grade Furs this season not only surpasses all previous showings both as to quality and quality, but also in the extremely close-cutting of the prices. Our purchases have been extensive and in the very best markets, and we are enabled to make the greatest money-saving offer in Furs ever put before the public.

FROM 3/- NOW

Write for Catalogue. The Graves Display of Genuine Furs in all the most becoming and fashionable styles is handsomely set forth in our New Catalogue, which is sent post free to any address on receipt of a postcard. All the Furs are shown in natural colours and charming variety; **Coney Seal, Natural Squirrel, Fitch, Marmot, Kolinski, Foxoline, Hare,** and all the favourite and most beautiful types of Furs at keenest competitive prices, and supplied on convenient Easy Monthly Payment Terms, or **2/-** in the £ Cash Discount

WE DELIVER to all approved orders, carriage paid to destination, any set selected from the Catalogue, on receipt of a small payment now. Balance in equal monthly payments if you are entirely satisfied after careful examination in your own home. The fullest approval is allowed and if you are in any way disappointed, we immediately refund the whole of your money. Send small payment now, and secure delivery of a beautiful Set of Furs. You need be under no obligation whatever unless you are assured of the quality and value, and decide to keep the Furs.

In your own interests send a Postcard for our handsome Catalogue to-day. It shows you how you may enjoy the comfort and luxury of wearing Furs of undeniable quality, with the convience of spreading the cost over the next few months.

Write and ask for Fur Catalogue.

J. G. GRAVES LTD. SHEFFIELD.

CLINCHER CYCLE AND MOTOR CYCLE TYRES EASY TERMS AT CASH PRICES

We supply this world-renowned make of Tyre at rock-bottom cash prices on Easy Terms. Any grade of **'Clincher' Tyres** supplied to approved orders for small payment with order and the balance to be completed in equal monthly payments if you are entirely satisfied after full examination in your own home. All Tyres carry the Manufacturers' Guarantee.

The 'Clincher' Popular Tyre. Wired or Beaded edge. Sizes: 26x1⅜; 26x1⅜; 26x1⅜; 28x1⅜; 28x1⅜; 26x1⅜. Price, Cover & Tube, **11/3** 2/3 Monthly.

The 'Clincher' B Tyre. Wired or Beaded edge. Sizes: 26 x 1⅜; 28 x 1⅜; 26 x 1⅜; 28 x 1⅜; 28 x 1⅜. Price, Cover and Tube, **13/-** 2/5 Monthly.

The 'Clincher' A Won Roadster Cycle Tyre, wired or beaded edge. Sizes: 26 x 1⅜; 28 x1⅜; 26 x 1⅜; 28 x 1⅜; 26 x 1⅜; 28 x 1⅜; 26 x 1⅜; 28 x 1⅜ Price, Cover and Tube, **17/-** .. .. 2/10 Monthly.

The 'Clincher' Vacuum Grooved Tyre, with wired or beaded edge. Sizes: 26x1⅜; 28x1⅜; 26x1⅜; 28x1⅜; 26x1⅜; 28x1⅜. Price, Cover and Tube, **17/9** .. 3/- Monthly.

The 'Clincher' A Won Motor Cycle Tyre, Beaded Edge. Cover only.
26 x 2 **25/6** .. .. .. 4/3 Monthly.
26 x 2½ **28/6** .. .. .. 4/9 Monthly.
26 x 3 **32/6** .. .. .. 5/5 Monthly.

Write for Catalogue. Send a Post Card to-day for our handsomely Illustrated Catalogue of 'Clincher' Cycle & Motor Cycle Tyres, which we supply on easy terms at cash prices, from **7/-**

J. G. GRAVES LTD. SHEFFIELD.

THE GRAVES GENUINE SHEFFIELD CUTLERY SERVICE

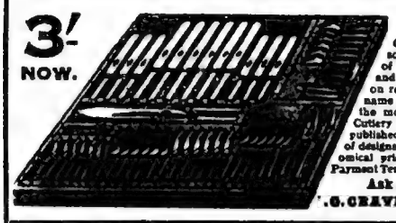
WE DELIVER the Graves Genuine Sheffield Cutlery Service comprising **50** pieces without case, to all approved orders for **2/-** Now, and the balance in nine monthly payments of **3/-** if you are entirely satisfied after full examination in your own home. **2/-** in the £ Cash Discount

THE GRAVES SHEFFIELD CUTLERY SERVICE COMPRISES:—

6 TABLE KNIVES	6 DESSERT FORKS	6 EGG SPOONS	1 SUGAR SPOON
6 TABLE FORKS	6 DESSERT SPOONS	2 TABLE SPOONS	1 SUGAR TONGS
6 DESSERT KNIVES	6 TEA SPOONS	1 SALT SPOON	1 JAM SPOON

1 PR 9-IN SHEFFIELD FORGED DOUBLE SHEAR STEEL CARVERS, IVORETTE HANDLES.

3/- NOW.



50 pieces for 30/-

Write for Catalogue. Our Manufacturers' Handsomely Illustrated Catalogue of Genuine Sheffield Cutlery and Plate will be sent per return on receipt of a Postcard bearing name and address. This Book is the most complete guide to the Cutlery and Plate Industry ever published, & shows a splendid variety of designs in all departments, at economical prices and on Easy Monthly Payment Terms or 2/in £ Cash Discount

Ask for Catalogue M

J. G. GRAVES Ltd. SHEFFIELD.

THE GRAVES WORLD'S BEST CYCLES

WE DELIVER the Graves 'Speed King' Modele de Luxe exactly to specification (Lady's or Gent's) carriage paid to all approved orders for **10/-** NOW, and Easy Monthly Payments after delivery until the account is cleared, if you are entirely delighted and satisfied with the machine after the fullest examination at your own home.

REYNOLD'S WELDLESS STEEL TUBING, DUNLOP FIRST GRADE TYRES, PHILLIPS YOKE AND HINGE BRAKES, STURMEY-ARCHER 3-SPEED GEAR, HANS RENOLD ROLLER CHAIN, BROOKS PLATED SPRING SADDLE, WILLIAMS PATENT CHAIN WHEEL, WILLIAMS LATEST PATENT CRANKS, HOFFMANNS' STEEL BALLS, DOVER HANDLE GRIPS AND LEVER TIPS.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE POST FREE. A Post Card will bring per return our handsome Cycle Catalogue which exhibits a full range of Ladies' and Gent's 'All Weather' Models with detailed specifications and full particulars of our convenient easy payment system. **Wherever you live** you may profit by our Trade challenging Offer, and enjoy the convenience of our easy purchase terms. It costs you nothing to secure this interesting and practical book. Write Now.

J. G. GRAVES Ltd. SHEFFIELD.

ELEGANT FASHIONS IN SMART COSTUMES

Every Lady should send a Post Card for our handsome display of new and fashionable Costume styles, charmingly illustrated in colours, and including patterns of the most tasteful and becoming cloths for present wear. Our pictures show the exact styles of the garments, and the patterns enable you to judge the quality, appearance and finish of the materials. The prices range from **21/-** to **50/-** and we deliver any costume carriage paid to approved orders for **5/-** with order, the balance being payable in equal monthly payments if you are entirely satisfied with the Fit, Quality, and Value after you have fully examined the Costume and tried it on in your own home. If you are in any way disappointed we will immediately refund the whole of your money.

FOR 5/- MONTHLY

Send for Patterns to-day. You will be surprised to find how easy it is to dress in good taste if you avail yourself of our convenient Easy Payment Terms or Cash Discount.

J. G. GRAVES Ltd. SHEFFIELD.

GENUINE STAFFORDSHIRE CHINA.

Our new Catalogue of Glass and China Ware shows the choicest and prettiest Dinner and Tea Services one could wish to see, also graceful designs in Toilet and Trinket Sets, Clock Sets, and a large variety of useful and ornamental ware all marked at keenly competitive prices, and delivered carriage paid to approved orders for small payment now, and balance in equal monthly payments if you are entirely satisfied after examination in your home.

J. G. GRAVES LTD. SHEFFIELD.

GRAVES 'DREADNOUGHT' OVERCOATS EXACTLY TO YOUR MEASURES.

Made from carefully selected, beautifully woven cloths of great durability and soft and warm finish in all the most fashionable and gentlemanly designs and shades for present wear. A masterpiece of high-class Tailoring, and designed and built throughout upon accurate anatomical principles.

Delivered Carriage Paid to approved orders for **5/-** now, balance in equal monthly payments if you are entirely satisfied with style, fit, quality, and finish. Money back if you are disappointed.

FOR 5/- NOW

Write for Patterns. On receipt of a Post Card we send you an unrivalled selection of Overcoating samples cut from the actual cloth lengths we are now making up—Double Breasted **35/-** Single Breasted **30/-** All the most popular cloths are included. Durable Tweeds in a large variety of designs and shades, Blanket-faced Tweeds of soft and comfortable finish, and a magnificent selection of handsome, hard-wearing Yorkshire Overcoatings in all the favourite colourings.

Our Samples will show you that we specialise in cloths that are warm without being inconveniently heavy, substantial without being cumbersome. Once you have the material in your hands you will be convinced of their superiority. You will find that all tastes have been consulted, and all preferences duly provided for, and should you entrust us with your order, you can rely on us pleasing you in the matter of style, fit, workmanship and finish. Patterns sent Post Free to any address on receipt of Postcard.

J. G. GRAVES LTD. SHEFFIELD.

MAKE YOUR OWN XMAS CARDS

They Will Save You Money, and Please Your Friends Better Than Bought Christmas Cards.

"I WISH I could draw! I'd do my own Christmas cards then!"

Many people at Christmas time wish that, and for a very good reason, too.

However pretty or expensive the average Christmas card is, it has the drawback that any number of other people can buy it and send it to their friends. In fact, a popular Christmas card will sell by the hundred thousand, and it occasionally happens that you receive cards on Christmas Day identical with some you have sent to your friends.

In cutting away all the black parts from this design of Father Christmas, use a sharp knife, and be very careful about the eyes, mouth, and nose.

The card you draw yourself has the advantages that it is not only unique, but it has its own personal touch about it. People appreciate something over which you have taken some trouble, however inexpensive it is, far more than they do something you have bought.

There is not the slightest reason why you shouldn't make your own cards this Christmas. All you want are a number of plain cards, a paint brush, a sharp penknife, black ink, and this copy of *Pearson's Weekly*. Now to set to work.

Cut out the black and white pictures of Father Christmas and the Pierrot and paste up on strong notepaper. Paste up the little bunch of holly leaves and the wording "Christmas Greeting" as well.

When the paste is dry, cut away carefully all the *black* parts of the four drawings. You must do this very carefully, or else you will cut away some of the thin white lines, as, for instance, those between the holly leaves. A sharp penknife is better than any scissors for this purpose.

When all the black parts are cut out you will now have four stencils from which you can make as many of your own Christmas cards as you like.

If you would prefer a Pierrot on your cards, try this one—

Let us take the picture of Father Christmas. Place your stencil of him on your blank Christmas card, hold it down firmly, or, better still, clip together with paper clips, and paint in with ink all the cut-away parts. Use as little ink as you can, or else it will run and spoil your picture.

The wording "Christmas Greeting" can be done in exactly the same way, above Father Christmas, and the whole surrounded with holly leaves. When putting the holly leaves round the card use all three leaves for the four corners, but only the two bottom ones along the sides and the top and bottom. You can get prettier cards, if you wish, by using water colours instead of black ink. The holly leaves

You will need this "Christmas Greeting" for the top of your cards—

would be stencilled in green, and the berries in red. Father Christmas, of course, would have a red hat and cloak, with just a touch of red on his cheeks.

The Pierrot design can be used in exactly the same way and coloured to suit your fancy.

If you have a little skill in drawing you should not have much difficulty in making other designs. A steaming plum-pudding on a dish, a Christmas tree, a silhouette of yourself from a portrait, and so on, can quickly be drawn and stencils made from them.

The advantage of the stencil is that you can use it over and over again, and make as many of your own Christmas cards as you please, with very little trouble. The only real trouble is cutting out the designs, which must be done with the utmost care.

And the appreciation of your friends will repay you for all the trouble you have taken.

(I should like one of these Christmas cards myself, so just to see how well you can do them I am offering a prize of half-a-guinea for the best card sent to me made from either of the above designs. Your cards can be plain, black, or coloured, just as you wish. Place your card in an envelope and address it to "The Stencil Editor," *Pearson's Weekly*, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C. Let me have them by December 15th at the latest.—EDITOR.)

—and this piece of decorative holly for the corners.

EATING MEANT TORTURE.

Acute Indigestion for Nine Years.—Dizziness and Splitting Headaches.
Another amazing cure by Dr. Cassell's Tablets.

A more remarkable story than that reported has seldom come to light. It is that of Mrs. Elizabeth Hammond, of Llanhennock, Caerleon, near Newport, Mon. For no less than nine years this lady endured torture. She was unable to retain any kind of food on her stomach. Yet she is in the most perfect health to-day. Surely here is a wonder—or would be, did we not know the power of Dr. Cassell's Tablets. But let Mrs. Hammond tell her own story. She says: "I can never express how much I owe to Dr. Cassell's Tablets. I was positively at death's door, wasted to a shadow, and so utterly helpless that I could hardly move at all.

Mrs. Hammond, Newport.

"For nine years this had gone on, and though I had been to doctors, had taken endless doctors' medicine, and also attended hospital, could find no relief. From the first onset I was never free from Indigestion, which became so severe that I dreaded food. Every morsel I ate caused me torturing pain in my chest right through to my back.

"It was as though something were being screwed into my body, and no ease could I get until I had thrown up all I had eaten. Naturally, I wasted away till I had no strength at all. I only wished to be left alone to brood over my misery. I would lie on a couch, even on the hearthrug, for hours, utterly exhausted. My head ached frightfully, and there was a mazy feeling always present, as though things were swimming round me. I was badly constipated, too. I became terribly depressed. I used to hold my head with both hands, and just long to scream. I was so utterly, hopelessly miserable, I felt sure my end was near, and I hardly cared. But about three months ago a friend got me some Dr. Cassell's Tablets. It seems miraculous, yet it is true, that after the first few doses I felt better, and from that time I have steadily progressed. To-day I am as strong and well as ever in my life." Benefit by this true story. Prove Dr. Cassell's Tablets in your own case.

Dr. Cassell's Tablets

strengthen and restore every organ of the body, re-establish the vital forces, give tone to the nerves, and generate new life for the whole system. They act more brilliantly than any other medicine known in cases of Nervous Breakdown, Nerve and Spinal Paralysis, Infantile Paralysis, Neurasthenia, Nervous Debility, Sleeplessness, Anæmia, Kidney and Stomach Disorders, Children's Weakness, and General Bodily Fatigue, Brain Fag, and all run-down conditions. They are quite safe for even the youngest child or most delicate invalid. All chemists sell Dr. Cassell's Tablets at 10½d., 1s. 1½d., and 2s. 9d. The 2s. 9d. size being the most economical to buy.

SEND FOR A FREE BOX.

Send your name and address and two penny stamps for postage, etc., to Dr. Cassell's Co. Ltd. (Box A37), Chester Road, Manchester, and you will receive a trial box free.

GREETINGS!

By the time you've reached this page, my readers, the result of our labours for the past few weeks has been before you in review order. I've just had a last glance at the pages myself before sending them to press, and in spite of the fact that, in the course of my work as Editor, I have read and re-read the matter several times over, I failed to find a dull column.

One thing struck me very forcibly—there is very nearly £1,000 in cash prizes, as well as Christmas hampers, consolation gifts, and so on, offered in this one issue. Some of my readers are certainly going to have a happy Christmas free from all money worries. My only regret is that it isn't possible to serve you all alike. But though I personally cannot provide it, I can and do most heartily wish you very much happiness this Yuletide, and in this wish the whole of the staff of the cerise-coloured one enthusiastically joins me.

MARRYING FOR A HOME.

I generally get a dozen or so problems, that Master Cupid has set for solution, sent to me every week. Most of them I answer direct, as they only concern just two people. Some, however, will interest all lovers, so I answer them on this page. True Love's problem is one which, I am sure, has faced many a lover since the world began.

"I am very much in love with one of the prettiest girls round here," he writes. "She is perfectly willing to marry me and, I think, would make me a good wife. But she has told me that though she likes me very much she's not really in love with me, but wants to get married for the sake of a home. She is one of those girls who say that they will never really be in love. Now, I don't think that I ought to marry her, though most of my friends say I ought to consider myself lucky to have the chance. She may very well meet the right man after we are married, however, and then she will regret marrying for a home. So I don't quite see in what way I am lucky to have the chance." ——

No, nor do I, True Love. If the girl is simply marrying you for the sake of a home the chances are that your married life will not be so happy as it should be, for you can't have happiness where the love is all on one side. Perhaps she may learn to love you after you are married, but it is a very big perhaps. Personally I say that you are unwise to get married in the circumstances, True Love. What do my readers think of Master Cupid's latest problem?

FIRING TORPEDOES.

"In your reply to T. H. G. a few weeks ago," writes Isleworth, "you stated that, as a rule, torpedoes are fired above water by all battleships. This is not quite correct. All battleships and cruisers are fitted with submerged tubes, while torpedo boats, torpedo boat destroyers, and a few gunboats are fitted with above-water tubes. No ship, nowadays, that is large enough to have a submerged tube fitted is fitted with above-water tubes. As some of our torpedo boats and destroyers have a beam of scarcely seven feet, and a torpedo tube is nearer twenty feet in length, it is impossible to put them below. In these boats the tube works on a pivot, so that when it is in use it can be trained outboard. When not in use it is put along the length of the boat. In manœuvres a torpedo floats as a rule, but during war it is caused to sink to prevent it being found by the enemy and its secrets discovered." ——

That's a very interesting addition to my reply to T. H. G., Isleworth. I am sending you a little gift which, while not quite so expensive as a modern torpedo, will, I am sure, prove more useful to you.

A JOKE?

This is the kind of *joke* I receive so regularly that it is about time I published it as a warning to others. Frankly I am getting a little tired of it. Here it is: "Dear Editor,—Having tried unsuccessfully to obtain one of your much-coveted penknives and failed, I have decided to purchase one from you. I accordingly inclose postal order for 1s. 6d., and shall be obliged by your forwarding one of the penknives at your earliest convenience. Yours faithfully, Canny Scott. P.S.—I regret I have forgotten to inclose the P.O., but no doubt, to a firm like yours, which is able to give away hundreds of pounds in prizes each week, one paltry P.O. will make no difference." ——

"Dear Canny Scott,—Having received dozens of requests similar to yours in the last few weeks, I have decided to make an example of one culprit, even if I do have to give him a penknife, and print his letter. Yours faithfully, The Editor. P.S.—I regret to find that I have forgotten to send you the penknife after all, but no doubt, to a man with a nerve like yours, there will be no difficulty in borrowing any number of penknives from your friends."

A MISTLETOE WORRY.

Christmas time brings Christmas questions. Many of these questions have to do with that good old custom of kissing under the mistletoe. Jack, however, objects to it being called a good custom, and for a very good reason from Jack's point of view. "I am engaged to be married," he writes, "and my sweetheart and I will be sure to go out a lot this Christmas to various parties. Mistletoe will be everywhere, and everybody who likes will be allowed to kiss my girl. Do you think that is fair? She won't promise me not to allow anyone to kiss her, for she says it is only a custom and doesn't mean anything. But it's a custom I don't like." ——

I sympathise with you, Jack, though your sweetheart is quite right in saying that it is only a custom. I can quite understand that you will feel jealous, however, but don't let that jealousy spoil your fun. Your course of action is quite clear. Every time a pretty girl appears under the mistletoe you make a dash for her and kiss her. It's only a custom, you know! And, perhaps, then your sweetheart will say it is a custom she doesn't like!

FROM A COLONIAL READER.

E. S. O. is a mining engineer. "I have taken in your paper for over eight years," he writes, "and during that time I have read it in most parts of the world. Many a time *Pearson's Weekly* has been my sole companion over the prairies and mountains, and never once have I had any reason to wish for a better. Only readers situated as we are, when or a lonely prospecting trip into the Wild West, can appreciate your paper at its true value. As an old western pioneer once said to me, 'Say, sonny, but it's the real goods *every* time,' and that's the highest praise which can be given out here. Before I finish I want to thank you for the consolation prize I won in your last Colonial 'Middles' Contest. I wish there were more of those competitions abroad." ——

So there will be in the future, E. S. O. There is one running now which you should have plenty of time to enter, for it doesn't close till March 9th, 1914. Get as many of your friends to enter as you possibly can, too, because I want each Colonial contest to beat the last. The amount in the last competition, £222, was good; but I want this one to be better; in fact, I want it to go over the £300 mark. It will only do that if my Colonial readers talk about it, and mention it to their friends in their particular part of the world. Colonial coupons were printed in two or three recent issues.

LUCKY NUMBERS.

I have received a large number of interesting letters from readers concerning a recent article on lucky numbers. While I thank them for writing to me, I must add that it is quite impossible for me to deal with them all on this page. I select F. P.'s letter. "The number 4 is a very prominent one with me," he writes. "My father, mother, and two brothers all died on the fourth day of different months, and are buried in 4 different parts of England. I was married on a 14th, and it was on a 14th that the family of two were increased to 4 by the arrival of a boy and girl soon after 4 a.m. in a house numbered 42. During our married life we have moved 4 times. But my wife and self are not a bit superstitious, so if you care to send along 4 penknives or——" ——

Enough! If I acceded to your request, F. P., I should get letters from readers whose lucky number was something far greater than 4! But you'll get one penknife all right, and that will be worth four of any other penknives because you have won it with an interesting letter.

RESULT OF "MIDDLES" No. 92.

The First Prize of £2 a Week for 5 Years has been awarded to:

R. CLEALL, Band 1st K.R.R., Aldershot, for the "Middle":

"FAR AWAY"—"WINKLE" WITHOUT PIN.

The Second Prize of £50 has been awarded to:

W. J. PARTINGTON, 77 Park Street, Madeley, Salop, for the "Middle":

"PENNILESS"—PRETTY STALL-HOLDER'S VICTIM.

The Third Prize of £10 has been awarded to:

MRS. E. HOBBS, 72 Marlborough Road, Bowes Park, N., for the "Middle":

"YAWNING"—ALTHOUGH "UNDERHANDED"—EXCUSE.

A Graphophone has been awarded to each of the following competitors:

E. A. Stewart, Electric Station, Fethard, Co. Tipp.
J. K. Ewart, 7 Lonsford Place, Monkstown, Dublin.
Harry Wade, 31 Avon Road, Hale, Cheshire.
John Liddle, 34 Sea Road, Fulwell, Sunderland.
H. J. Perrin, 19 Rookery Road, Handsworth, Birmingham.
G. E. Moss, 163 Warminster Road, Norton Lees, Sheffield.
William Wardle, 16 Howarth Street, South, Sunderland.
E. F. Upward, 3 Wolseley Terrace, Broadlands, Newport, I.O.W.
G. Binns, 24 Walkden Street, Mansfield.
J. A. Leggett, Tarrant Street, Arundel, Sussex.

100 PRIZES OF 10/- EACH.

Agar, W., 112 Victoria Rd., Co Durham; Ainsworth, G., Fforchaman Rd., Cwmaman, Aberdare; Anderton, R., 17 Porlock Lane, Worsley Mesnes, Wigan; Arnell, M. M., 52 Halford Road, Richmond; Avery, A., 23 Norman Street, Blackburn; Barlow, J., 34a Woodfield Cres., Ridderminster; Bell, H. W., 19 North Street, Haverfordwest; Bernthal, J. C., 20 Maple Hall Rd., Chatham; Bird, S., 9 Ebenezer Place, Tong Rd., Armley, Leeds; Bishop, J., Livermere, Curtis Rd., Parkstone, Dorset; Blackburn, Miss I., 97 Lr. Mount St., Dublin; Blois, Capt. W., 30 Ludlow Rd., Itchen, Southampton; Bragg, A. G., 7 Sandy Rd., Scaforth, Liverpool; Butcher, Norman, 7 Grafton Rd., New Brighton, Cheshire; Chouldward, G. H., 54 Bury New Rd., Prestwich, Manchester; Clifton, G., 10 Holyoake Ter., Sevenoaks; Cottrell, A. P., 28 Elm Grove Rd., Mossley Hill, Liverpool; Coupe, J., 54 Egerton St., Heywood, Lancs.; Davidson, Capt. W. N., Straiton Lodge, Portobello, Edinburgh; Dear, F., Highwood, Ringwood, Hants; De Lacey, Mrs H., 63 Bridgford Rd., W. Bridgford; Dodwell, Miss, 111 Farm St., B'ham; Drew, P., 6 Windsor Gdns., N. Shields; Dugan, J. H., 26 Roxburg Street, Belfast; Duhart, Mrs. 6 Hills Road, Cambridge; Gargett, H., 34 Sycamore Terrace, York; Gilbert, G. S., 107 Minard Road, Catford, S.E.; Gowers, Miss D. W., 27 Queen's Rd., Watford; Gorst, R., Market Hall, Lancaster; Grieve, T., 25 Robertson St., Greenock; Harper, B., 93 Kingston Rd., Birmingham; Haywood, Mrs., 4 Percy St., Greenhill, Blackpool; Heatley, G., 354 Heather Rd., Small Heath, Birmingham; Hindle, E. M., Town Hall, Macclesfield; Hingston, S. W., 9 The Mall, Sliigo; Holford, Clarence, 154 Widnes Rd., Widnes; Howarth, Wm., 423 Manchester Rd., Bury; Hulme, F., 67 Norwood Grove, Liverpool; Ireland, Mrs. G., Gunthorpe, Oakham, Rutland; Jackson, R., 10 Upper Berkeley Pl., Clifton, Bristol; James, H., Clarence Rd., East Cowes, I.O.W.; Jost, Wm., Park Gates, Ambleside Rd., Hailsham; Kelsall, W. A., 18 Stratford Ave., Chorley Old Rd., Bolton; Kendrew, A. J., Barnstaple, N. Devon; Knight, Sergt. C. H., 139 Bty. R.F.A., Preston; Leroy, Miss B., Theatre Royal, W. Stanley, Co. Durham; Lewis, H. J., 2 Florence Pl., Griffithstown, Mon.; Long, J., Higher Tranmere, Birkenhead; Lorne, Oliver, Vale View, Shaftesbury, Dorset; Lowe, J. S., 80 Beamsley St., Bradford; Loynes, Sgt. J., 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards, Victoria Barracks, Windsor; Mahon, F. F., Staff-Surgeon H.M.S. "Thescus," Queenstown; Main, G., 3 Park St., Dover; Marshall, D., Heath Band, Eccles New Road, Manchester; Mather, W. H., 6 Windsor Gdns., Bolton; Maxwell, L., 29 Clarendon Rd., Whalley Range, Manchester; McAfee, A. D., 18 Lynmouth Rd., Fortis Green, N.; McIntyre, J., Bank House, Leek, Staffs; McKay, James, 23 Bruce St., Greenock, Renfrews; McShannon, A., 60 Laidlaw St., Tannochside, Uddingstone; Measures, Mary, The Golden Crust Bakery, Hundon; Meggs, Mrs., 1 Darley Road, Eastbourne; Molloy, J., 4 Hollybank Rd., Drumcondra, Dublin; Montford, C., Ditchburn Road, West End, Wilton; Nicholls, D., Vicarage Cottages, St. Peges, Slough; Osbourne, A. R., 35 Broadgate, Lincoln; Owen, Charlie Le, 13 Padeswood Rd., Buckley, Chester; Parker, C. J., C.Y.S., R.N. Barracks, Devonport; Pearson, H. B., 8 Marsland Rd., Sale; Perry, M. H., 18 St. Edward's Rd., Southsea; Pestell, J., 6 Mary St., The Falls, Ardsley, Yorks; Phillips, W., 77 Whitmore Rd., Brockley, S.E.; Price, E. G., Newbern Hall C. S., near Scotswood; Price, S. A. T., 99 Longley Rd., Tooting, S.W.; Reid, A. E., 31 Orleans Rd., Old Swan, Liverpool; Riddell, W. F., 113 Mt. Annan Drive, Glasgow; Robertson, Miss A., 44 Kerr St., Portrush, co. Antrim; Robinson, W., 81 Bilhay Lane, W. Bromwich; Rudkin, C. E., 104 Kimberly Rd., Leicester; Scott, H., 13 Cranmore Gdns., Belfast; Slade, C. A., 9 First Ave., Devonport; Stafford, Leonard, 29 Threadneedle Street, Sutcliffe, M., 64 Ferndale Rd., Liverpool; Tubrum, B., Devon Club, Eastbourne; Taylor, E. A., 6 Western Rd., Maidstone; Tey, Leon, Spring Vale Farm, Birmingham Rd., Walsall; Thompson, 188 Colwyn Rd., W. Hartlepool; Timms, A., Fairmead, Bickley; Chelmsford; Upton, E., 16 Gladstone Rd., Deal; Waller, J., 35 Selby St., Lowestoft; Walters, C., The Tors, Crich, nr. Matlock; Warneford, Mary, 830 High Rd., Chiswick, W.; Watts, A. A., Elm View, New Clcethorpes, Grimsby; Wells, C., 40 Dean Road, Hockley, Birmingham; White, Mrs. B., The Firs, Eckington, nr. Pershore; White, C., 7 Belle Vue Terrace, Turner's Hill, Chester; Whiteford, B., Rogart, Sutherland; Willcocks, A., 11 St. John's Terrace, Newquay; Williams, F. W., 10 Alexandra Rd., Ammanford, Devon; Winn, Mrs., 1 St. Margaret's Ave., St. Margaret's Bay.

80 PRIZES OF 5/- EACH.

Alton, C., 73 Wild Street, Derby; Bailie, G., 237 Grosvenor Rd., Belfast; Barnes, N., High Level Bridge, Maidstone; Bassill, Mrs. Annie, 55 Avenue Rd., Westcliff-on-Sea; Bastick, P., Parcel Post Office, Liverpool; Beechey, Harry, Carlisle Terrace, St. Ives; Bottom, J. W., 106 Banner Cross Rd., Ecclesall; Burdett, W., Narborough, nr. Leicester; Burtenshaw, J. H., 12 Nightingale Rd., Lr. Clapton, N.E.; Carrick, F., 47 Leigham Vale, Streatham, S.W.; Castle, Miss N., Upper Swell, Stow-on-the-Wold; Clarke, T., Oak, Totley, near Sheffield; Coates, G. E., Laurie Villa, Wickham; Costain, J. H., 64 Highfield Road, Rock Ferry; Crossland, W. F., 65 Argyle Rd., Heeley, Sheffield; Dale, 177 Rock Avenue, Gillingham; Davis, A., The Drapery, Sidmouth; Davis, A. G., 1a Woodfield Crescent, Kidderminster; Dean, G., 23 Brougham Hayes, Bath; Duksesmith, Jack, 10 Cole Darby End, near Dudley; Eager, E. H., 69 Wilton Avenue, Southampton; Elmer, H. C., 21 Gainsborough St., Sudbury; Ephgrave, J., Dunsottar Avenue, Eaglescliffe, S.O.; Featherstone, J. L., Kenilworth Sq., Rathgar; Field, L. G., 59 London Rd., Ipswich; Flatman, W. J., 41 Farnham Rd., Handsworth; Frith, E., Bishopdown Cottages, London Rd., Salisbury.

(Remainder of names omitted owing to lack of space. A complete list can, however, be seen at the offices of "Pearson's Weekly.")

Note.—A prize for each reader whose letter is dealt with on this page or whose suggestion for a title is used.

OSMOND'S GREAT COMPETITION "SERIAL."

New readers start here:

SYNOPSIS.

£500
Lawyer's Advice—A "Trial" Solicited. (*John Bull*)

£500
Grandmotherly Legislation—Marbles Abolished Next. (*John Bull*)

£500
Dead Silence—Crank's Ideal Sunday. (*John Bull*)

£500
Out of Fashion—Fitting Permitting Sitting. (*John Bull*)

£500
Short of Cash—Studying Employer's Signature. (*John Bull*)

£300
Footsore—Sword-dancer—After Mistake. Your Favourite Paper.

£300
Backing Horses—Berth's Death Sometimes. (*Answers*)

£250
My Wife Wants—Merely Seven-Sevenths. (*Answers*)

£250
A Sham—Advocate's Eyes Moist. (*Answers*)

£250
Confident—Confirmed Optimists. (*Tit-Bits*)

£200
Working Man—After Election—Nobody. (*John Bull*)

The most highly-paid Serial Story ever Written—up to the present for Thirty-two Words London Editors have been pleased to pay **£4,050**

I want names and addresses to send further instalments from. For terms and latest instalment, see page iii. of cover.

MONEY FOR "U"

If you compete in the great Competitions run by **Answers, Tit-Bits, John Bull, Pearson's, Ideas, Sunday Chronicle, London Mail, Etc.**

£500 Every Week
For First Prizes.
IT'S FREE

£500 Won Five times and over £10,000
in Smaller Prizes by the **Competitors' Mutual Society.**

SEND THE COUPON BELOW

For TWO First Prize Winning Efforts also copy of the PRIZE WINNERS' CHRONICLE, giving PROOF of wins by hundreds of members in all papers. Enclose stamped addressed envelope (or 1d. stamp) and pay on wins as follows:—**5/- Prize, 9d.; 7/6 Prize 1/-; 10/- Prize 1/6; £1 or over 2/6 in the £.** If you like our Efforts you can have a three months' supply on our **NO WIN—NO PAY SYSTEM.**

FREE "SUCCESS" COUPON.

EFFORTS WANTED FOR .....
NAME .....
ADDRESS .....
.....

Address to:
Supt., Competitors' Mutual Society, 26 North Bar Without, Beverley.

YOU'LL HAVE A MERRY CHRISTMAS IF YOU WIN A "MIDDLES" PRIZE

1st PRIZE	2nd PRIZE	3rd PRIZE
£300	£50	£10
100 PRIZES OF 10/-	80 SPLENDID XMAS HAMPERS (Fully described on page 614.)	80 PRIZES OF 5/-

The adjudication of the attempts in the "Middles" competitions is carried out in such a way that the best lines must win. There is no element of chance. All the entry forms received undergo a preliminary examination by a staff of competent judges, and those lines which show no merit, or which have in any way contravened the rules of the competition, are put aside. The remainder are then again carefully read, and those showing the greatest amount of merit are placed before the Editor who, in consultation with three responsible members of the staff, finally decides the order of merit. This system keeps a staff of judges continually employed.

The method adopted is so thorough and exhaustive that it is quite impossible for any meritorious line to be overlooked. The names and addresses of the competitors are never taken into consideration, and no award is decided arbitrarily on any one opinion. No pains are spared to insure the success of the really best lines.

THIS IS WHAT YOU DO.

First of all, choose one of the words or phrases given opposite for "Middles." Then construct a "Middle" of two or three words which shall have some bearing on the chosen word or phrase. The first word of your "Middle" must begin with any one of the letters contained in the word or phrase you choose, and the second and third with any of the letters in the alphabet used either once or twice. For instance, suppose you take the phrase "MISTLETOE BOUGH." Use, say, the letter "M" as the initial for the first word and, say, "N" and "A" for the second and third, and we get "MARRIED—NOT APPRECIATED." Or, using the same phrase "MISTLETOE BOUGH," we could use the letter "B" as initial for our first word, and, say, "P" for the second word, and we get "BRINGS PROPOSALS."

MAKE "MIDDLES" FROM THESE WORDS.

HELPMATE	SNAP DRAGON	REVELLERS	TRUE	KILLING POULTRY
BIG CRIMES	FATHER'S PRANKS	SHARP FROST	TOY DRUM	CONFIDENCE TRICK
TACTFUL WIFE	TANGO LESSONS	BURIED ALIVE	PRECARIOUS	GRAMMATICAL ERR[illegible]
NEXT MORNING	CIRCUSES AGAIN	MOTHER'S SACRIFICE	HOLLY BERRIES	TERRIBLE EXPER[illegible]
STOCKING	MISTLETOE BOUGH	WARM OVERCOATS	A NUISANCE	SOMETHING SUBS[illegible]
HOOLIGAN	NEVER RETURNED	CHRISTMAS BOXES	YULETIDE LOG	ANCIENT CUSTOMS
POST OFFICE	DANCE PROPOSALS	GUILTY CONSCIENCE	GHOST STORIES	LARKIN'S SPEECHES
HARLEQUINADE	MERRY CHRISTMAS	IMPORTANT BUSINESS	CHRISTMAS RUSH	DRAMATIC ME[illegible]

RULES FOR COMPETITORS.

1. All attempts must be forwarded on the printed entry form or they will be [illegible].

2. Names and addresses must be [illegible] in ink in the space provided. Typewriting and [illegible].

3. When you have filled up the entry form, [illegible] postal order for sixpence, [illegible] addressed to the Editor, *Pearson's Weekly*, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

4. Mark your envelope "Middles No. 95," in the top left-hand corner.

5. All attempts must arrive [illegible] before Tuesday, December [illegible].

6. There are two entry forms, you may use one or both. [illegible] two "Middles" [illegible]. If you use the two entry forms a postal order for 1s. must be sent.

7. Everyone [illegible] must send a sixpenny postal order for each entry form. The P.O. must be made payable to C. Arthur Pearson, Ltd., and must be crossed "& Co." in the manner shown in the example. The number must be written in the space provided on the entry form. When the P.O. of higher value is sent for more than one entry form the number of the P.O. must be written on each entry form.

8. The first prize of £300 will be awarded to the sender of the "Middle" considered to be the best by the adjudicators, [illegible] originality of idea will be taken [illegible]. If there are more senders than one [illegible] "Middle" [illegible] by the adjudicators, the prize will be divided amongst [illegible].

9. Other prizes will be awarded by the adjudicators [illegible] those [illegible] efforts show merit.

10. The Editor will accept no responsibility [illegible] the loss or non-delivery of any attempt submitted.

11. No correspondence will be entered into in connection with the competition, and [illegible] will be ignored.

12. The published decision is final, and competitors may enter on this understanding only.

THE RESULT OF "MIDDLES" No. 92 APPEARS ON PAGE 642.

<.. *Cut across here* ....

ENTRY FORM, "MIDDLES," NO. 95.

WORDS SELECTED.	"MIDDLES."
95	....
....	....

I agree to abide by the decision published in "Pearson's Weekly" and to accept it as final, and I enter on this understanding, and I agree to abide by the conditions printed in "Pearson's Weekly."

Signed .... [No. of P.O. ....

Address ....

You may send TWO "Middles" on the above entry form with a postal order for 6d; if you use both the one above and the one below send 1/-.

<.. *Cut across here* ....>

ENTRY FORM, "MIDDLES," NO. 95.

WORDS SELECTED.	"MIDDLES."
95	....
....	....

I agree to abide by the decision published in "Pearson's Weekly" and to accept it as final, and I enter only on this understanding, and I agree to abide by the conditions printed in "Pearson's Weekly."

Signed .... [No. of P.O. ....

Address ....

This Insurance Scheme covers any person travelling as a passenger in any part of Great Britain or Ireland.

OVER £13,000 ALREADY PAID

We pay any number of claims in respect of each accident—not the first claim only.

£1,000	RAILWAY	**INSURANCE.** (For terms see below.)
£100	RAILWAY	
£100	CYCLING	
£100	AEROPLANE	

506 CLAIMS ALREADY PAID,

including three of £2,000 and one of £1,000.

This Insurance holds good for **any number of claims of £1,000** each—not for one only. **£1,000** specially guaranteed by THE OCEAN ACCIDENT AND GUARANTEE CORPORATION, LIMITED, 36 to 44 Moorgate Street, London, E.C., to whom notices of claim, under the following conditions, must be sent within seven days to the above address.

£1,000 will be paid by the above Corporation to the legal representative of **any person killed by** an accident in Great Britain or Ireland to the passenger train in which the deceased was **travelling as a passenger** (including post-office servants in railway sorting vans), and who, at the time of such accident, had in his, or her, possession, the Insurance Coupon on this page, or the paper in which it is, with his, or her, usual signature, written in ink or pencil, on the space provided at the foot. This paper may be left at his, or her, place of abode, so long as the coupon is signed.

PROVIDED ALSO, that the said sum shall be paid to the legal representative of such person injured, should death result from such accident within three calendar months thereafter, and that notice of the accident be given within seven days of its occurrence.

£100 In the event of a person, not being a railway servant on duty, nor a suicide, nor engaged in an illegal act, having the current number of *Pearson's Weekly* on him, or her, at the time of being killed [illegible] railway accident in the United Kingdom, although not by an accident to any train in which he, or she, may be travelling as a passenger, the legal representative of the deceased will receive the sum of ONE HUNDRED POUNDS, whether the coupon be signed or not, provided notice in every case be given to THE OCEAN ACCIDENT AND GUARANTEE CORPORATION, LIMITED, 36 to 44 Moorgate Street, London, E.C., within seven days from the occurrence of the accident.

One Hundred Pounds will be paid to the legal representative of any cyclist who meets his death by accident while actually riding a [illegible] cycle, provided that deceased at the time of such accident had in his, or her, possession, the Insurance Coupon on this page, or the paper in which it is, with his, or her, usual signature, written in ink or pencil, on the space provided at the foot, and that death occurred within twenty-four hours thereafter, and that notice was given of such accident to the said Corporation at above address within three days of its occurrence. This paper may be left at his, or her, place of abode, so long as the coupon is signed.

One Hundred Pounds will be paid to the legal representative of anyone dying as the direct and sole result of injuries inflicted upon him (or her) within the United Kingdom by a falling aeroplane, PROVIDED that death occurs within twenty-four hours from the receipt of the injuries, that he (or she) shall prior to the accident have signed this Coupon-Insurance-Ticket in the space provided at the foot, that he (or she) shall not at the time be on the aeroplane nor engaged in aeronautics, and that notice of the accident be given to the Corporation within three days of its occurrence.

The above conditions are of the essence of the contract.

This insurance holds good for the current week of issue only, and entitles the holder to the benefit of, and is subject to the conditions of, the **"Ocean Accident and Guarantee Company, Limited, Act,"** 1890. Risks Nos. 2 and 3.

The Purchase of this Publication is admitted to be the payment of a Premium under Sect. 33 of the Act. A Print of the Act can be seen at the office of this Journal, or of the said corporation. No person can recover on more than one Coupon-Insurance-Ticket of this paper in respect of the same risk.

Subscribers who have duly paid a twelvemonths' subscription for PEARSON'S WEEKLY in advance to their newsagent, or to the Publisher, need not, during the period covered by their subscription, sign the coupon, or carry the paper on their person. It is only necessary to forward the newsagent's receipt to the publisher of the paper, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., and a certificate will be sent in exchange.

Signature ....

Available from 9 a.m. Monday, December 1st, 1913, until midnight Monday, December 8th, 1913.

THE OCEAN

ACCIDENT & GUARANTEE CORPORATION LIMITED

offers to Professional and Business Men, through its up-to-date Policies, complete protection against the many risks of Accident and Sickness to which All are exposed.

Head Office: MOORGATE ST., LONDON.

Your husband won't want to go [illegible]

TANGO TEAS

If you make your cakes from the recipes given in the — Special Xmas Number of —

HOME COOKERY.

NOW SELLING. PRICE [illegible]

Printed by the FIELD & QUEEN (HORACE COX) [illegible] Buildings, E.C., and Published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON [illegible] at Pearson's Weekly Buildings, Henrietta Street, [illegible]

PEARSON HELLIWELL,

The Record Holder of Big Wins.

PRIZES VALUE

£50 to £500

WON FOR CLIENTS:

"REGISTERED LETTER—ROWTON HOUSE RARITY."
"TRAVELLERS' TALES—THOUSANDS NEED SHAVING."
"FIREWORKS—FREE—TO SKATERS."
"LOST—LAZY FOOTBALL TEAM."
"MODERN LIFE—MICROBES TAKE EASILY."
"WALKING OUT—WORDLESS WOOER TANTALISES."
"STRUCK OIL—SURNAME HYPHENED LATER."
"MASTER CUPID—MAY GLORIFY DUNGEON."
"NOT A WORD—NEAR SALVATIONIST'S DRUM."
"MORE THAN ENOUGH—MITE'S HEAVY HOMEWORK."
"SENT HOME—SIMPLY 'INDISPENSABLE' EMPLOYEE."
"SAILOR'S HOME—SWEETENS ROUGHEST EXPERIENCES."
"BEWARE—BUSINESS AXIOM."
"PAY TO-MORROW—"MOTTER" OF "ROTTER."
"HANDS UP—ABSURD SOCIETY HANDSHAKE."
"THE DOCTOR—VILE DRINK CONCOCTOR."
"IN ALL PANTOMIMES—NONAGENARIANS LAUGH MOST."
"MAKES ME COMPLAIN—'BACCA NAVVIES OBTAIN."
"GOING TOO FAR—COOK'S HAT SIMILAR."

If you are disgusted with cheap so-called Specials, try the real thing—Pearson Helliwell's "Winning Special" Efforts. The Specials you will eventually buy.

All Efforts I Supply are Exclusive and Evolved to Catch the Judge's Eye.

TERMS (Any Contest):

"WINNING SPECIALS" (equal to my FIRST PRIZE WINNERS), 2 for 1/-; 4 for 1/6; 8 for 3/-, and stamped address.

MONTHLY TERMS: 2 "Winning Specials" weekly, 3/-; 4 weekly, 5/6; 6 weekly, 8/-; 8 weekly, 10 -, and 4 stamped addressed envelopes.

Stamped Addressed Envelopes for all Replies. 15 per cent. commission on all wins over £1 in value.

PEARSON HELLIWELL, Competition Journalist, Stechford, BIRMINGHAM

£250 FOR FOURPENCE.

November 15th, "ANSWERS" First Prize:—

"Diamonds—Describing Eyes—Sweetheart."

ALSO Ten Pound Prize in YOUR FAVOURITE PAPER on the same day, with a cartload of smaller wins in all Competitions, following my £50 win in the preceding week. For fuller details see announcement in "The Competitors' Journal," and I will forfeit £1,000 if any of these specified solutions were not supplied by me to the winners.

Such magical results, week after week, are the finest possible proof that YOUR best chance of winning is to give my solutions a trial. No favouritism, all guaranteed unduplicated, and None Better to be bought Anywhere.

SOLUTIONS: 4 for 1/-. **PRIZE-WINNING SPECIALS** (equal to my £500 and £300 winners), 2 for 1/-, 4 for 1/6, 8 for 3/-. Monthly Terms: 2 weekly, 3/-; 4 weekly, 5/6; 6 weekly, 8/-; 8 weekly, 10/-. Enclose sufficient stamped addresses; 10 per cent. commission on prizes over £1.

F. FAIRGOOD, 117 Kirkwood Road, Peckham.

EXCUSE ME—

Sorry to interrupt you, but I have a little sound advice to give you. No matter how anxious you may be to win a prize, DON'T send cash away for Efforts before making a FREE test. This will prevent disappointment, to say nothing of expense. If you saw gold lying by the way, would you pass it by? I think not. Then you should not ignore the opportunity I offer you of winning a fortune

FREE

If you will send me a stamped addressed envelope I will send you TWO EXCLUSIVE PRIZE-WINNING SOLUTIONS FOR ANY CONTEST absolutely gratis. My Efforts are what the prize lists proclaim them, THE VERY BEST. Esmond Leary will FORFEIT £100 if duplication is proved against me.

SEND FREE COUPON TO-DAY

To ESMOND LEARY (Section 41),
4 DUKE STREET, STRAND, W.C.

Please send me TWO FREE EXCLUSIVE EFFORTS for .....
for which I enclose a stamped address. In the event of your Efforts winning me a Prize I agree to send you 3/- in the £.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

..... 6.12.13.

OSMOND'S 'SERIAL.'

(New Readers Kindly Turn to Page 643 for Synopsis.)

LATEST INSTALMENT—

Banking—Bankrupt's Wife, Generally.
PREMIER WINNER, "John Bull," 15-11-'13.

Real Economy—Our Kitchener Scorns.
£50 (Second Prize), Your Favourite Paper, 15-11-'13.

Sensational Discovery—Cricketer Ordering 'Duck.'
£10 (Third Prize), Your Favourite Paper, 29-11-'13.

ONE OCCASIONAL WIN IS MERE LUCK—CONSISTENT WINNING LIKE MINE PROVES MERIT—I HAVE CAPTURED ONE, TWO, OR THREE PREMIER WINNERS FOR 30 CONSECUTIVE WEEKS.

NO OTHER WRITER EVER CLAIMED TO HAVE WRITTEN PREMIER WINNER FOR EVEN SIX CONSECUTIVE WEEKS.

NO LIVING WRITER HAS CAPTURED MORE THAN ONE £500 PRIZE DURING HIS LIFETIME—I HAVE CAPTURED FIVE FOR MY CLIENTS SINCE JUNE 21ST THIS YEAR.

I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT THE ADJUDICATORS WANT!

I issue a Challenge of £1,000 to any person who undertakes to disprove that I supplied any one of the above lines.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—All clients MUST send stamped and addressed envelopes to facilitate early dispatch.

All of my winners were supplied at my ordinary rates; so why pay double the price for lines elsewhere? If my lines didn't win I'd have to charge double the price too. Anyone can see that my living comes out of the big sums received from clients in commission on First Prize winners.

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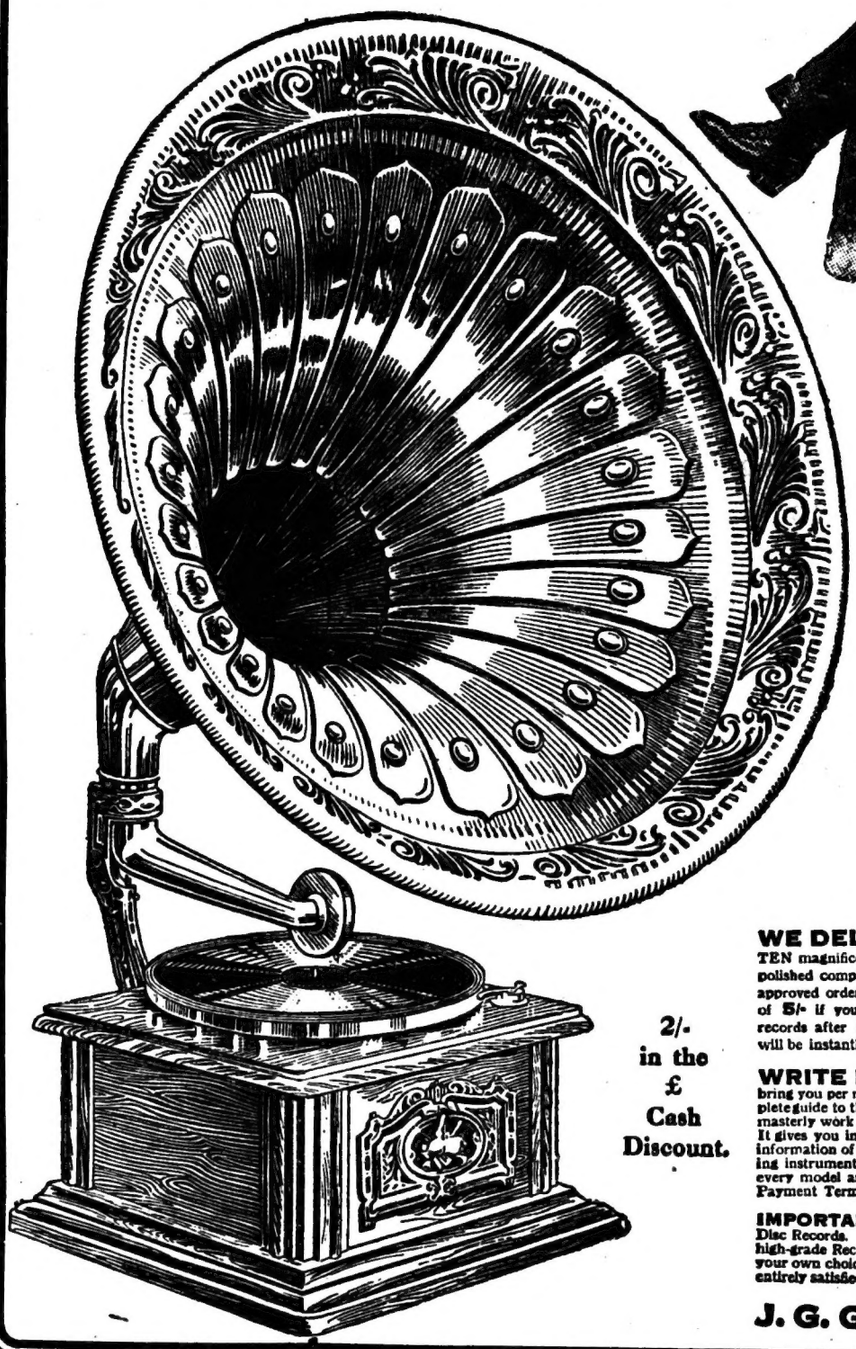

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